Black North American and Caribbean Music in European Metropolises

A Transnational Perspective of Paris and London Music Scenes (1920s-1950s)

Veronica Chincoli

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to
obtaining the degree of Doctor of History and Civilization
of the European University Institute

Florence, 15 April 2019

European University Institute
Department of History and Civilization

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Department of History and Civilization - Doctoral Programme

I Veronica Chincoli certify that I am the author of the work "Black North American and Caribbean Music in European Metropolises: A Transnatioanl Perspective of Paris and London Music Scenes (1920s-1950s). I have presented for examination for the Ph.D. at the European University Institute. I also certify that this is solely my own original work, other than where I have clearly indicated, in this declaration and in the thesis, that it is the work of others.

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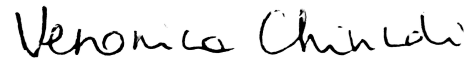

25 March 2019

Abstract of Thesis

This thesis examines black music circulation in the urban spaces of London and Paris. It shows the complexity of the evolutionary processes of black musical genres, which occurred during the late imperial period (1920s-1950s) within the urban music scenes of two imperial metropolises, and how they played an important role on the entertainment circuit. Both cities functioned as sites of cross-fertilisation for genres of music that were co-produced in a circulation between empires and Europe. Musicians of various origins met in the urban spaces of the two cities. The convergence and intermingling of musical cultures that musicians had brought with them produced new sounds. This process was influenced by a minority group (blacks), but had a significant and lasting influence on the musical world.

By creating an historical account of the encounters and exchanges between people of different origins within the music scenes, this thesis examines music development and the complexity of processes of racialisation according to their historical locality and meaning. Using a variety of sources including police reports, government documents, interviews, guidebooks and newspapers, this work contributes to widen the perspective of historical studies on music developments, emphasising their social and spatial dimensions, which are fundamental for the exploration of music scenes, in general, and for the spread of black genres of music in particular.

Black music styles spread internationally, but were produced in several specific locations where music industry infrastructure was developing. In the urban spaces of the music scenes of London and Paris social networks were formed by various actors - both blacks and whites - and were crucial for music production and reception; different perceptions of blackness, processes of competition, and debates on authenticity emerged; and processes of regulation and negotiation underpinned the intervention of public authorities.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis marks an important point in my life, an achievement at the end of a five-year path during which my personal life has profoundly changed.

First, I would like to thank all the protagonists of this story, the musicians and the cities that fascinated me from the beginning, stimulating my interest for researching, deepening my knowledge and understanding.

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Finally, I thank Music, the true motif behind this work.

List of Abbreviations

(Archives and Collections)

AN	Archives Nationales (Paris)
AP	Archives de Paris (Paris)
APP	Archives de la Préfecture de Police (Paris)
BBC WAC	BBC Written Archives Centre (Reading, UK)
BL	British Library (London)
BnF	Bibliothèque Nationale de France (Paris)
BnF AUD	Bibliothèque Nationale de France, département de l'Audiovisuel (Paris)
LMA	London Metropolitan Archives (London)
NSA	National Sound Archive of the British Library (London)
TNA	The National Archives (London)
TNA HO	Records of the Home Office, The National Archives (London)
TNA LAB	Records of the Ministry of Labour, The National Archives (London)
TNA MEPO	Records of the London Metropolitan Police Office, The National Archives (London)

Le plaisir est peut-être la forme
la plus pratique de l'internationalisme.

Jean Gravigny
Montmartre en 1925
(1925)

I've always thought that music is a thing of harmony,
it brings people together, it shouldn't separate people.

Coleridge Goode
(1988)

Introduction

> The problem of black music is that it cannot be defined by any wholly unassailable criteria. On the one hand it cannot be assumed that all black singers or musicians perform is black music, simply because of their ethnic origins, while on the other it may not be defensible to argue that black music can be performed only by black artists. […] Yet the phenomenon of 'black music' is profoundly evident to all who are interested and involved in popular music from any point of view.[1]

Since the late nineteenth century, black music has acquired significant value in the musical world. This element of distinctiveness should not to be attributed to ideas of particular abilities that groups have because of their ethnic characteristics, which have been used to discredit and also discriminate against black forms of art. Black musicians and performers have increasingly played a role in the musical world and black genres of music have spread worldwide deeply influencing other genres. This thesis is conceived as an examination of how black music circulated through a network of people whose contacts and exchanges took place in the urban spaces of London and Paris, two important metropolises in the entertainment circuit that were capitals of nation-states and empires but also cities experiencing transformation in a global context. By adopting an explicitly urban perspective, my aim is to try to overcome divisions between global, local and national, and to adopt an approach that allows me to examine these three dimensions. The fact that London and Paris were capitals of both empires and nation-states requires that these two dimensions are considered and not analysed separately, as well as the fact that groups and individuals of African origins spent part of their lives in these two cities requires that both global and local dimensions are considered.

In the late imperial period, Paris and London were two metropolises at the centre of increasing globalising connections. With the process of the internationalisation of cultural life, they were places that attracted groups of people from different parts of the world. Global networks established through musical connections and exchanges found in the cities the spaces where to develop, and this in turn transformed the cities, especially their cosmopolitan character.

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[1] Paul Oliver, ed., *Black Music in Britain: Essays on the Afro-Asian Contribution to Popular Music* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990), 5.

The circulation of music must be understood transcending national borders, yet it cannot ignore the relevance of the specific urban context. Indeed, the common urban experience was one fundamental element of the circulation of musical forms that transcended national borders and language differences but was not separated from a spatial dimension. The specific urban context is central for two reasons. First, the large part of the musical innovations of the twentieth century tended to take shape in the urban space, where theatres, concert halls, and nightclubs increasingly appeared, and where the entertainment industry concentrated its infrastructure. Second, it was in urban spaces that encounters between people of different origins, with different histories and backgrounds, and between them and the local population, took place. These encounters often occurred in specific parts of the cities becoming the potential vehicles for metropolitan change and the spread of new genres of music.

Black genres of music gained an international diffusion through their spread in urban contexts.[2] Their spread in European metropolises was closely connected to the combination of several factors including the movements of people who arrived in the cities and decided to settle there or to leave; the demand for certain musical shows determined by popular tastes and fashions; the changing social and geographical configuration of the urban music scenes; and the ease or difficulty of performing in relation to national laws or municipal restrictions. One of the main concerns of this work is to address the complexities of the spread of black genres of music, with a special interest in the social dimension of this spread taking place in two urban contexts that were important musical sites at an international level.

My perspective builds on the significant research made in several fields of study: black studies in general and black European studies in particular; urban cultural studies; and studies on music.

In the field of Black studies, the initial prominence of race as a primarily political category must be understood in the context of the violent events of the 1970s and 1980s, when several race riots occurred both in Britain and in the Unites States. Together with the so-called "cultural turn," these events had a strong impact on the ways in which race and ethnicity were conceived, and a new generation of scholars opened new insights on the history of black populations in order to comprehend the specificities that lay behind political and social struggles. For example,

[2] For instance, researching about Martiniquan music, Monique Desroches has written that the beguine played in the dance halls of the capital Fort-de-France well exemplifies the formation of an urban Antillean music which takes inspiration from the rural tradition. See Monique Desroches, *La Musique Traditionnelle de La Martinique* (Montréal: Université de Montréal, Centre de recherches caraïbes, 1985).

the scholars of the Centre for Contemporary Studies at the University of Birmingham played a fundamental role in introducing race as a category to be studied. The group harshly criticised the idea of race as a problem in itself: it was the crisis of British society that produced fear and anxiety, which in turn made people see economic and social problems through race, and stigmatise a community.[3]

In 1987 the British scholar Paul Gilroy argued for the necessity of historicising the concept of race as a cultural and active category, and of conceiving the development of culture as a complex and dynamic process through which definitions of blackness emerged from different elements in the diaspora. Furthermore, this historical dimension was to be located in the achievements of black expressive culture, and in particular of black music.[4] As Kobena Mercer has pointed out, the focus of analysis shifted to the question of identity, and led to a re-conceptualisation of ethnicity that had to be understood in its diverse manifestations, and in the context of new diasporas created by postcolonial migrations.[5] In the context of the turn towards a focus on identity the interest for African American identity has tended to dominate the field. The analysis of the concept of race and of the experiences of blacks in the United States as a specific group in many cases has become the point of reference with which to compare the history of black people in other parts of the world.

However, over the last decades an increasing number of scholars have adopted a transnational approach, contesting the validity of analyses which focused on the national paradigm. In 1993, Paul Gilroy elaborated the concept of the Black Atlantic, which had a strong impact on the field of Black studies. Gilroy argued for the formulation of a new concept in order to explain the forms of double consciousness that being both European and black require, which he in turn adapted from the idea of the double consciousness conceived by the African American writer and activist W.E.B. Du Bois at the beginning of the twentieth century.[6] The

[3] This idea was elaborated in the volume written by the director of the Centre Stuart Hall and other scholars, Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan Press, 1978). A few years later, they published a collection of essays that aimed at shedding light on the marginalisation of race in cultural studies which could not continue: Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 70s Britain* (Birmingham: Hutchinson University Library, 1982).

[4] Paul Gilroy, *There Ain't No Black in the Union Jack: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation* (London: Hutchinson, 1987).

[5] Kobena Mercer, *Welcome to the Jungle: New Positions in Black Cultural Studies* (London and New York: Routledge, 1994).

[6] In his book *The Souls of the Black Folks* (1903) Du Bois wrote that the double consciousness was a peculiar sensation of "twoness", being an American and a Negro - "two souls and two ideals in a dark body" – and that the history of the American Negro was the history of the effort to merge this double self in a true self. W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 2014), 7–8.

Black Atlantic is conceived as a space which included black populations from Africa, the Americas, and also European cities. According to Gilroy, it is within this space that black culture is constantly being constructed and deconstructed in a fluid process that involves different identities and various manifestations. Moreover, in opposition to both nationalist and ethnically absolute approaches, he affirms that cultural historians could "take the Atlantic as one single, complex unit of analysis in their discussions of the modern world and use it to produce an explicitly transnational and intercultural perspective."[7] Gilroy's formulation was conceived as a challenge to the way in which black American cultural and political historical analyses had been developed. The idea of the Black Atlantic was considered a useful way to understand the Atlantic side of the African diaspora, which, built on a network between the local and the global, required an analysis able to go beyond the opposition between national and diaspora perspectives.

Since the 1990s, the concept of the African diaspora has increasingly been preferred precisely because it allows to deemphasise national specificities and to grasp the transnational dimension of the experience of black populations, both in cultural and physical terms.[8] As Alexander Weheliye has written, the preference for the concept of the diaspora is related to its capability to rethink the national frame: "diaspora enables the desedimentation of the nation from the 'interior' by taking into account groups that fail to comply with the reigning definition of the people as a cohesive political subject […], and from the 'exterior' by drawing attention to the movements that cannot be contained by the nation's administrative and ideological borders."[9]

The historians Geneviève Fabre and Klaus Benesch have claimed that the concept of diaspora has finally emerged as a powerful idea that challenges the ways of thinking about contemporary multicultural societies, but also about the past: by employing this notion, theoretical assumptions and familiar issues can be re-conceptualised. Furthermore, the very idea

[7] Paul Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1993), 15.
[8] For a reconstruction of the use of the term diaspora see Brent Hayes Edwards, 'The Uses of Diaspora', *Social Text* 19, no. 1 (2001): 45–73. An example of the these types of studies is Darlene Clark Hine and Jacqueline McLeod, eds., *Crossing Boundaries: Comparative History of Black People in Diaspora*, Blacks in the Diaspora (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999).
[9] Alexander G. Weheliye, 'My Volk to Come: Peoplehood in Recent Diaspora Discourse and Afro-German Popular Muisc', in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 162.

of the African diaspora can be understood as an interplay of different forms of diasporas that are connected to each other in multiple and complex ways.[10]

This debate has also included Latin America and the Caribbean, where the discourse of *mestizaje* - the term which describes a supposed particular form of miscegenation that Latin American and Caribbean societies have experienced - has traditionally prevailed. The forms of racial hybridity that are supposed to have generated from this *mestizaje*, have become manifestations of national categories of the various states. This has tended to obscure the differences within the states in the name of an achieved racial democracy, and the inequalities and discriminations that people of African descent experienced were not recognised.

The field of Afro-Latin studies has expanded over the last two decades and historians have increasingly adopted Atlantic, transatlantic and diasporic approaches.[11] The history of Afro-Latin communities has started to be understood in a system of global relations that includes Africa, Americas and Europe. Thus, creolisation is considered to be part of a broader process of cultural encounters and exchanges.[12] An interesting contribution to this debate is the book *Afro-Cuban Diasporas in the Atlantic World* by Solimar Otero (2010). Turning away from traditional studies which consider the connections between Africa and the United States as central to the examination of the African diaspora, Otero wants to shed light on the Afrolatino communities that identify themselves as both African and Latin American. He explores Afro-Cuban diasporic communities formed by emancipated slaves of the West African ethnic group Yoruba, between the cities of Lagos in Nigeria and Havana in Cuba. Otero proposes a different perspective for analysing the Afro-Atlantic diaspora: rejecting a unidirectional approach, he stresses how Afro-Atlantic communities moved back and forth and examines the Atlantic as a cyclical space of movement, and creation of identities and cultures.[13]

Over the last decade, the debate on globalisation has influenced an increasing number of studies which have used the concepts of blackness and diaspora as analytical categories to understand the global dimension of black encounters and networks both between and within

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[10] Geneviève Fabre and Klaus Benesch, *African Diasporas in the New and Old Worlds: Consciousness and Imagination* (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2004), xiii–xxi.

[11] For instance, the concept of diaspora has been used in the study of the relationship between Afro-Cubans and African Americans: Frank Andre Guridy, *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2010).

[12] The new currents in African diaspora studies on Latin America and the Caribbean have recently been discussed in a special issue of the *African and Black Diaspora: an International Journal*: Robert Lee Jr. Adams, ed., 'Rewriting the African Diaspora in the Latin America and the Caribbean. Beyond Disciplinary and National Boundaries', *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 5, no. 11 (January 2012).

[13] Solimar Otero, *Afro-Cuban Diasporas in the Atlantic World* (Rochester: University Rochester Press, 2010).

black communities in different territories. For example, the book *Transnational Blackness. Navigating the Global Color Line* (2008), explicitly addresses the theorisation of race in the global context, and explores the relationship between race, blackness and globalisation with various contributions on the Americas, Europe, Asia and Africa.[14]

In the context of the opening of the field of black history, studies on blacks in Europe have expanded over the last two decades. In many cases the interest has been concentrated on the experiences of blacks in specific countries, thus privileging a national focus.[15] This tendency testifies to the importance of understanding the black diaspora in a broader context, but also the need to integrate specific national experiences in a broader analysis that takes into account how colonialism and racial categories have influenced the histories of Europe.[16]

The essays published in the book *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (2009) have applied a multidisciplinary approach to the African diaspora in Europe. The volume is a twofold attempt to transcend both geographical and disciplinary specificities. The analysis of concepts such as "Black Europe" and "Black European" drives attention to localities and subjectivities which reflect the histories of nations and cities.[17] Moreover, the relation with the United States is considered useful, yet at the same time problematic. Since the debate about the African

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[14] William Manning Marable and Vanessa Agard-Jones, eds., *Transnational Blackness. Navigating the Global Color Line* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). Among other examples of the adoption of this perspective are: Dawne Y. Curry, Eric D. Duke, and Marshanda A. Smith, eds., *Extending the Diaspora: New Histories of Black People* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009) which examines histories of black peoples globally, extending the analysis to less studied parts of the world, including the Pacific Ocean; and Jean Muteba Rahier, Percy C. Hintzen, and Felipe Smith, eds., *Global Circuits of Blackness: Interrogating the African Diaspora* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2010)., which aims at showing that the encounters between black people across national boundaries reveal a global connection, by interpreting diaspora as a "floating revelation of black consciousness" that "brings together in a single space dimensions of difference in forms and content of representations, practices, and meanings of blackness."

[15] As examples of early attempts in this direction, see for instance Peter Fryer, *Staying Power: The History of Black People in Britain* (London: Pluto Press, 1984); Allison Blakely, *Russia and the Negro: Blacks in Russian History and Thought* (Washington: Howard University Press, 1986); Allison Blakely, *Blacks in the Dutch World: The Evolution of Racial Imagery in a Modern Society* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1993). More recent examples of studies on Blacks in European countries include the works on Germany, in particular during the Nazi regime. See Clarence Lusane, *Hitler's Black Victims: The Historical Experiences of European Blacks, Africans and African Americans During the Nazi Era* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003); Tina Campt, *Other Germans: Black Germans and the Politics of Race, Gender, and Memory in the Third Reich* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 2004).

[16] The special issue "Nordic Reflections of African and Black Diaspora," *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal* 7, no. 1 (2014) has gone in this direction. The contributions are intended to "complicate and challenge hegemonic branding of the Nordic region that have posited colonialism, and engagements in the trans-Atlantic slave economy and racist categorizations, in particular, as an external, continental European problem." Lena Sawyer and Ylva Habel, "Refracting African and Black Diaspora through the Nordic Region," *African and Black Diaspora: An International Journal*, Nordic Reflections of African and Black Diaspora, 7, no. 1 (2014): 1–6.

[17] Darlene Clark Hine, Trica Danielle Keaton, and Stephen Small, eds., *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009).

diaspora has long been dominated by discussions about African Americans, there is the concern that concepts adapted from that context can be an obstacle to the emergence of appropriate investigations of Europe. Hence the insistence of the editors of the volume upon the need for an analysis of Blacks in Europe based on theories developed in that context.[18]

In the case of France the national focus and the impact of the transnational approach have been important elements in the recent evolution of French black studies. The issue of race had not received considerable attention until the early 2000s, at least in comparison to Anglophone historiography. In the national debate prior to that period, the discourse of France as a colourblind country in which the republican ideology was a constitutive element of the universalistic national identity, has prevailed. As a result of both the rise in transnational approaches to historical analyses and the internal shifts in the historiography of metropolitan France, this idea of colourblind France has been replaced by an increasing number of works that underscore the fact that France must face the social realities of race, and to recognise the role of slavery, colonialism, and cultural interactions in its history.[19] The outbreak of violence and disorders in 2005, which started in the Parisian suburbs and then extended to other cities, marked an important moment in France. Indeed, those events made clear that France was not immune to the "racial question." The *question noire* appeared in the French debate as a primary issue and revealed that the black population in the country had been invisible for a long time. In this context several French scholars have argued for the necessity of historicising this racial question, for its centuries-old history is seen to be crucial to understand contemporary society. Among these is Myriam Cottias who in the volume *La question noire: Histoire d'une construction coloniale* (2007), pointed out that as a consequence of the events in 2005 the memory of slavery and colonisation could not continue to be marginalised, and insisted upon the necessity to integrate the history of slavery and colonisation into the national history of France.[20] The book by Pap Ndiaye *La condition noire. Essai sur une minorité française* (2008), is another example of this new direction of studies. Insisting on the importance of the social aspects of the black question, Ndiaye adopts a perspective which directs attention to the

[18] The risk to apply concepts and theories developed in the United States on the European context had been already underlined by Allison Blakely, who asserted that the absence of a universal definition of "black" and the ambivalence of both white European and white Americans towards blacks must be considered as important factors. Allison Blakeley, 'Problems in Studying the Role of Blacks in Europe', *Perspectives* 35, no. 5 (June 1997): 1–4.
[19] Among the works that have pursued this direction of research are: Elizabeth Ezra, *The Colonial Unconscious: Race and Culture in Interwar France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2000); Sue Peabody and Tyler Edward Stovall, eds., *The Color of Liberty: Histories of Race in France* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).
[20] Myriam Cottias, *La question noire: Histoire d'une construction coloniale* (Paris: Bayard, 2007).

condition of the marginalisation of blacks in France and argues for the creation of a field of French black studies.[21] However, this perspective has tended to consider blacks as part of a marginalised group (*noirs*) without directing specific attention to the relationships internal to the group, and external with other groups within French society. The editors of the volume *Black France/France Noire. The History and Politics of Blackness* (2012) have addressed this complexity. In contrast to the discourse of colourblindness, they have explained how in France blackness exists as a social, cultural, and political formation, but this does not imply homogeneity, for it refers to different communities of African and Afro-Caribbean descent. The book is an example of the recent tendency to include the history of France in a broader European context through the exploration of the African diaspora, shedding light on the ways in which issues of race and blackness have been shaped in Europe.[22]

What has emerged very clearly in recent developments in the field of black studies in Europe is that the histories of slavery and colonialism play a central role.

Comparative studies on slavery have developed since the late 1940s. In particular, in the 1960s and 1970s a large number of scholars investigated slavery, and in many cases they directly connected it to the problems experienced by descendants of slaves in the societies they live. The failures of the system into which they were supposed to be integrated were explained with reference to the legacies of slavery, especially by historians of the United States.

Since the 1980s scholars of post-emancipation societies have tried to understand what the meaning of free labour was more deeply, instead of considering it as just the ending of coercion.[23] An interesting example of this direction of research is the volume edited by

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[21] Ndiaye has chosen the term "condition noire" precisely to indicate the social condition of a minority that experiences exclusion because it is labelled with the term "noire", a category that has changed its meaning over the centuries. Pap Ndiaye, *La Condition Noire: Essai Sur Une Minorité Française* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 2008).

[22] Danielle Keaton Trica, Denean Sharpley-Whiting, and Tyler Stovall, eds., *Black France/France Noire: The History and Politics of Blackness* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2012).

[23] In the United States a large number of studies have investigated the issues of emancipation and free labour in the Southern part of the United States including Eric Foner, *Nothing But Freedom: Emancipation and Its Legacy* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 1982); Michael Vorenberg, *Final Freedom: The Civil War, the Abolition of Slavery, and the Thirteenth Amendment* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001); Ira Berlin, *The Long Emancipation. The Demise of Slavery in the United States* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2015). Similar efforts have been made with regard to other countries in the American and African contexts, such as Frederick Cooper, *From Slaves to Squatters: Plantation Labor and Agriculture in Zanzibar and Coastal Kenya, 1890-1925* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1980); Rebecca J. Scott, *Slave Emancipation in Cuba: The Transition to Free Labor, 1860-1899* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); Thomas C. Holt, *The Problem of Freedom: Race, Labor, and Politics in Jamaica and Britain, 1832-1938* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1992). Various works have tried to include national or local analyses in a comparative perspective, including Frank McGlynn and Seymour Drescher, eds., *The Meaning of Freedom: Economics, Politics, and Culture after Slavery* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1992); Pamela Scully and Diana Paton, eds., *Gender and Slave Emancipation in the Atlantic World* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005); Stanley L. Engerman,

Frederick Cooper, Rebecca Scott and Thomas Holt, *Beyond Slavery: Exploration of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation societies* (2000).[24] The three scholars illustrate how the boundaries of the study of post-emancipation societies are ambiguous. First, they contend that temporally there are beginning dates, but no clear end, as the aftermath of slavery extends into the twentieth century with phenomena such as decolonisation and mass migration to cities. Second, at a spatial level, the metropole has usually been marginalised in the analysis, even though post-emancipation societies connected to the metropole in new ways, and that former slaves often moved freely in the metropolitan space. Hence, the need to integrate the metropole in the investigation. Third, they suggest that the study of free societies should be similar to that of slave societies, considered as totalities in which political economy, ideological legitimisation, and cultural aspects are closely connected.[25]

These points are important because they indicate how histories of black people and black cultural expressions, should consider the ways in which different societies dealt with emancipation and with the integration of former slaves. Over time the category of citizenship has entailed an ambiguity as a category of inclusion, based on the assertion of rights of men, and exclusion, based on the idea of differences between groups of people which legitimised conquest and colonisation. As Cooper, Scott and Holt have maintained, citizenship has always had a cultural content and "the fate of slaves after slavery had a great deal to do with the political, ideological, and cultural evolution of the metropolitan societies to which they were linked."[26]. This tension between inclusion and exclusion was an important element of the reception of black artistic forms, and at the same time the different social and cultural background of black artists influenced their way of experiencing life and their art, both in their places of origin and in the metropole.

Recent works on empires have tended to dismiss the predominant notion of a strict separation between metropole and colonies, which implied the idea of a singular direction of influences from the centre to the peripheries. This is in support of the idea that the relationship was far

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Slavery, Emancipation, and Freedom: Comparative Perspectives (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2007).

[24] Frederick Cooper, Thomas C. Holt, and Rebecca J. Scott, eds., *Beyond Slavery: Explorations of Race, Labor, and Citizenship in Postemancipation Societies* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2000). The essays in the book deal with British emancipation policy in Jamaica, the different paths taken out of slavery in Louisiana and Cuba, and imperialist ideology in British East Africa and French Africa with an effort to explore what lies beyond slavery: the link between labour, race and citizenship; the impact of collective action in the struggle to define citizenship; the tension between universalistic notions of humanity and discussions of virtues and failings of particular groups.

[25] Cooper, Holt, and Scott, 3–4.

[26] Cooper, Holt, and Scott, 17.

more complex, and that it implied a mutual influence between them, considered interacting parts of a whole. By emphasising networks and connections established within empires, these studies have re-conceptualised the relationship between centre and peripheries, and the impact of the empire on the metropole, thus challenging the division between national and imperial histories.

With regard to the British context, in 1999 John MacKenzie maintained that cultural practices, inseparable from the political and economic dimensions of imperialism, reveal both the interaction of multiple metropolitan cultures and the attempt to integrate them into an imperial whole.[27] As the historian Andrew Thompson has claimed, in British historiography the diversity and pluralism of both the empire and Britain have not been generally recognised. In recent years the understanding of the empire and its legacies has been considered important for interpreting Britain's present situation and has influenced debates about ethnicity and gender.[28] A contribution to this discussion is the volume edited by Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose *At Home with the Empire. Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (2006). In contrast to the traditional neglect of the significance of empire in studies on British history, the two editors assert that the history of Britain "has to be transnational", recognising how it has been a history of "connections across the globe, albeit in the context of unequal relations of power" and argue for an opening of both national and imperial history. Though its influence was uneven, the empire was present in people's everyday life and it was generally "taken-for-granted" as a component of Britain: the British metropole was an "imperial home," perceived as a part of the empire but at the same time imagined as separated from it.[29]

In the French context, there has been a similar development to re-conceptualise the problematic relation between nation and empire in French history. In his investigation the historian Gary Wilder has adopted the category of imperial nation-state, which includes both the metropolitan and the colonial. Through this concept, Wilder overcomes the frequent opposition between nation-state and empire, in order to analyse the various networks

[27] MacKenzie asserts that metropolitan cultures could be divided horizontally and vertically: cultures of different classes, of the various components of the United Kingdom, and of immigrant groups. John M. MacKenzie, 'Empire and Metropolitan Cultures', in *The Oxford History of the British Empire. The Nineteenth Century*, vol. 3, Ed. Andrew Porter (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), 271.

[28] In one of his books Thompson has investigated the actual impact of imperialism on different members of society (both individuals and groups), and the ways in which the British have dealt with their imperial history during and after decolonisation. Andrew Stuart Thompson, *The Empire Strikes Back?: The Impact of Imperialism on Britain from the Mid-Nineteenth Century* (Harlow: Pearson Education, 2005).

[29] Catherine Hall and Sonya O. Rose, eds., *At Home with the Empire: Metropolitan Culture and the Imperial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006), 5.

(interpersonal, cultural, political) that constituted France, the impact of colonial modernity, and the role played by the black population in the French context.[30] Another example of this direction of study is the work by Jennifer Anne Boittin, who has tried to combine the colonial and urban dimensions. In her study on Paris, Boittin has used the notion of "colonial metropolis" to indicate that the city was a colonial space where transnational encounters between Parisians and people of African descent took place: Paris was an integral part of the empire, the place where "the center and peripheries of empire coincided."[31]

In the context of the expansion of studies on culture and race, the spread of black forms of art throughout Europe has increasingly received attention from scholars in recent years. A large number of studies have explored the vogue for so-called Negro Art in the first part of the twentieth century and the spread of black music, jazz in particular, in the 1920s, the so-called "Jazz Age". For instance, in the French context various studies have examined the interplay between white avant-garde and black cultures,[32] as well as the jazz scene in Paris and the reception of that genre by French musicians.[33] The evolution of jazz in Britain has also been investigated, exploring how this genre of music has been received and transformed in the British context.[34]

The focus on particular countries has been paralleled by a large number of studies which have drawn attention to the specific experiences of African Americans, linked to the spread of black music and dancing since the nineteenth century. The interest in particular movements, such as the Harlem Renaissance, has revealed how connections between artists were important

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[30] Gary Wilder, *The French Imperial Nation-State: Negritude and Colonial Humanism Between the Two World Wars* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005).

[31] Jennifer Anne Boittin, *Colonial Metropolis: The Urban Grounds of Anti-Imperialism and Feminism in Interwar Paris*, France Overseas: Studies in Empire and Decolonization (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2010), xxiii.

[32] Among these are Petrine Archer Straw, *Negrophilia: Avant-Garde Paris and Black Culture in the 1920s* (London: Thames & Hudson, 2000); Brett A. Berliner, *Ambivalent Desire: The Exotic Black Other in Jazz-Age France* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 2002); Fionnghuala Sweeney and Kate Marsh, eds., *Afromodernisms: Paris, Harlem and the Avant-Garde* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013).

[33] See Ludovic Tournès, *New Orleans Sur Seine. Histoire Du Jazz En France* (Paris: Fayard, 1999); William A. Shack, *Harlem in Montmartre: A Paris Jazz Story Between the Great Wars* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001); Denis-Constant Martin and Olivier Roueff, *La France Du Jazz. Musique, Modernité et Identité Dans La Première Moitié Du XXe Siècle* (Marseille: Éditions Parenthèses, 2002); Jeffrey H. Jackson, *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003).

[34] See Catherine Parsonage, *The Evolution of Jazz in Britain, 1880-1935* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005); Hilary Moore, *Inside British Jazz: Crossing Borders of Race, Nation and Class* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007). In some cases these analyses have conceived the exploration of jazz as a music characterised by internationalism and a globalising phenomenon from its beginning, for instance George McKay, *Circular Breathing: The Cultural Politics of Jazz in Britain* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 3–4.

for their careers but also for the cultural scenes of the places they visited.[35] For instance, the volume *Blackening Europe: The African American Presence* (2004) includes contributions concerning a large number of European countries, some of which have not been frequently explored. Indeed, the editor Raphael-Hernandez maintains that over the last centuries European nations have started their own processes of being blackened with the arrival of an increasing number of black people. Therefore, it is worthy to see how ideas and practices travelled to Europe and changed it, in an effort to reverse the traditional view that understands African American experience through European assumptions. Moreover, the volume is conceived as a starting point for further discussions about the process of blackening of the whole continent that should take into account the variety of geographical influences.[36] One recent attempt that devotes attention to a form of black music, such as jazz, with a specific European perspective is the volume *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources* (2012), conceived not as a history of jazz in Europe, but as an exploration of the relationship between Europe and jazz.[37]

Various studies have drawn specific attention to Caribbean musical forms,[38] and scholars have also analysed the cultural links of Caribbean islands with the United States.[39] Recently, with the re-thinking of the relationship between nations and empires, several works have explored the connections between music, national identity and the empire in Britain and France.[40] A small number of studies have, however, explicitly investigated African American forms, such as jazz, and the musical styles from the Caribbean together.[41] Both in the French

[35] In the French context the connections between African Americans and Paris have been explored in fascinating works such as Michel Fabre, *From Harlem to Paris: Black American Writers in France, 1840-1980* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1993); Tyler Edward Stovall, *Paris Noir: African Americans in the City of Light*, 2nd ed. (United States: CreateSpace Independent Publishing Platform, 2012).

[36] Heike Raphael-Hernandez, ed., *Blackening Europe: The African American Presence* (London and New York: Routledge, 2004), 1–3.

[37] Luca Cerchiari, Laurent Cugny, and Franz Kerschbaumer, eds., *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2012).

[38] An early example of this direction of enquiry is Oliver, *Black Music in Britain*. Works on specific Caribbean genres such as Trinidadian calypso include Gordon Rohlehr, *Calypso & Society in Pre-Independence Trinidad* (Port of Spain: Gordon Rohlehr, 1990); John Cowley, *Carnival, Canboulay and Calipso* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996); Jocelyne Guilbault, *Governing Sound: The Cultural Politics of Trinidad's Carnival Musics* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2007). On French Caribbean genres see for example

[39] For instance, scholars have explored the connections between French-speaking territories in the Caribbean and the South of the United States, and the experience of Afro-Cuban writers and performers in the United States. See Martin Munro and Celia Britton, eds., *American Creoles: The Francophone Caribbean and the American South* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2012); Antonio M. López, *Unbecoming Blackness: The Diaspora Cultures of Afro-Cuban America* (New York: New York University Press, 2012).

[40] See Jeffrey Richards, *Imperialism and Music: Britain 1876-1953* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001); Barbara L. Kelly, *French Music, Culture, and National Identity, 1870-1939* (Rochester: University Rochester Press, 2008); Irene Morra, *Britishness, Popular Music, and National Identity: The Making of Modern Britain* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2014).

[41] One example is Jacqueline Rosemain, *Jazz et Biguine: Les Musiques Noires Du Nouveau-Monde* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1993).

and British contexts the connection between musical genres arriving from the outside - from the United States but also from Cuba - and genres coming from territories within the two empires including the Caribbean, still needs to be explored in a deep way.

An important element of the connection concerning these musical forms is that the encounters and exchanges between musicians took place in the urban space, where people gathered because of the opportunities the metropolises offered.

In *The Black Atlantic*, Paul Gilroy illustrates that dislocation has been a fundamental element in the history of black music. The music of migrants who have settled in Britain represents an example of the complex cultural exchange that has taken place there. Migrants have brought with them a cultural distinctiveness which they have adapted to the new situation, creating a new form of blackness. Furthermore, Gilroy has underlined how these cross-cultural exchanges have been facilitated by a common urban experience: a new form of blackness developed "within the underground, alternative public spaces constituted around an expressive culture that was dominated by music." The focus on the role of music makes London an important junction point of the Black Atlantic.[42] The common urban experience that Gilroy refers to, seems to be crucial for cross-cultural exchanges, but it has tended to be subordinated to wider perspectives or to analyses of specific diaspora communities. Thus, it still needs to be explored more deeply for understanding how black cultural forms circulated.

To examine this aspect, the spatial dimension is central. In historiographical debates the use of the term diaspora has put emphasis on movement and displacement. However, the importance of place has been stressed by various scholars. Referring to black Europe, Jacqueline Nassy Brown has argued that place should not be considered as static but constituted through movement: black European places are nodes that permit encounters and the shaping of networks, thus they should be defined by taking into account the connections with other places.[43] Besides, as Barnor Hesse has affirmed, although the idea of diaspora has permeated the debate, the relationship between nation and city configurations of blackness is still neglected and unresolved.[44]

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[42] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 81–83.

[43] Jacqueline Nassy Brown, 'Black Europe and the African Diaspora: A Discourse on Location', in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 201–11.

[44] Barnor Hesse, 'Afterword. Black's Europe's Undecidability', in *Black Europe and the African Diaspora* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 2009), 292. Michelle Wright has used the concept of the diaspora in the urban context comparing how black writers dealt with the issue of subjectivity in Berlin, London and Paris in the 1980s and 1990s. Michelle M. Wright, 'The Urban Diaspora: Black Subjectivities in Berlin, London, and Paris', in *Becoming Black: Creating Identity in the African Diaspora* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2004), 183–228.

An interesting concept in the debate about space and minority groups has been introduced by sociologist Nirmal Puwar. In her book *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place* (2004), Puwar uses the idea of "space invaders" to refer to women and racialised minorities who enter spaces from which they have been excluded, and emphasises the connection between bodies and space: "some bodies are deemed as having the right to belong, while others are marked out as trespassers, who are […] circumscribed as being 'out of place'. Not being the somatic norm, they are space invaders."[45]

To recognise the role that networks of minorities' cultures play within and across national boundaries, Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih, have suggested the concept of "minor transnationalism". Moving beyond the binary model of minority cultural formation, which sees the relationship between minorities and majority cultures as either opposition or assimilation, this concept indicates that minority interactions are more complex, including relationships with both majorities and other minorities in a shared transnational space. For Lionnet and Shih the transversal movements of culture include "minor cultural articulations in productive relationship with the major [...], as well as minor-to-minor networks that circumvent the major altogether." These movements produce "new forms of identification that negotiate with national, ethnic, and cultural boundaries, thus allowing for the emergence of the minor's inherent complexity and multiplicity".[46]

The relationship with the "external" world is a fundamental element of the articulation of space, especially in the case of cities that become gathering places for different groups of people. The link between urban and transnational perspective has been established by Michael Peter Smith, who in 2001 proposed the concept of "transnational urbanism" to understand the processes that shape social relations in the city. For Smith, the city is the place where local and global power are mediated, and the human foundation of transnationalism, because of the impact made by the agency of migrants.[47]

Writing about London, the sociologist John Eade has claimed that "places and people are not determined by certain essential characteristics but are constructed through social, cultural, political, and economic processes. London and Londoners […] are produced not just by what goes on within a particular place but by relations with an external world". Eade has also underlined that "places and people are defined not by singularity and coherence but by

[45] Nirmal Puwar, *Space Invaders: Race, Gender and Bodies Out of Place* (Oxford: Berg, 2004), 8.
[46] Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih, eds., *Minor Transnationalism* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005), 8.
[47] Michael P. Smith, *Transnational Urbanism: Locating Globalization* (Malden: Wiley-Blackwell, 2001).

multiplicity and ambiguity,"[48] hence the importance of revealing the complexity that emerges in different representations of places and the link to the imperial past.[49]

In a volume they edited, *Transnational Ties: Cities, Migrations, and Identities* (2008), Smith and Eade, have explicitly argued for the necessity to historicise transnationalism. Indeed, they have stressed that the study of the interplay between urban change and transnationalism should consider the importance of the changing historical contexts of both migrating groups and the places across which they move. In urban studies, geographical and spatial analyses have been privileged, whereas the historical implications of cross-national movements have been less considered. Furthermore, Smith and Eade have asserted the role of agency in the making of the urban social space: "the city is both a medium and an outcome of human agency, including agency of transnational migrants, their networks, and their projects [...]. It is the interplay of urban social structure, migrant agency, and identity politics that determines the specific confluence of transnational ties connecting people, places, projects and identities throughout the world."[50]

Several works have explored the connection between music and the spatial dimension regarding both the links to specific places and mobility across space, and the creation of national cultural identity.[51] In some cases the study of music and place has been linked to the debate on global and local perspectives, such as in the volume *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location: Between the Global and the Local* (2007), which has reintroduced the national dimension in the analysis, in order to reconsider how nation-states might be a 'mediator' of the two other dimensions.[52]

In contrast to the prominence of visual approaches to culture in urban and cultural studies, Michael Bull has claimed that sound is an important component which shapes people's everyday lives, particularly in the city. Thus, it should be explored to understand how people experience

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[48] John Eade, *Placing London: From Imperial Capital to Global City* (Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books, 2000), 6.

[49] Eade, 17. In his analysis of texts from the interwar years and the period between the 1980s and 1990s, Eade has asserted that the way in which people experienced London's transition from being an imperial capital to becoming a global city. This involved a continuity of racial and ethnic boundaries between insiders and outsiders established from the late nineteenth century.

[50] The city is described as a medium and an outcome of human agency because it offers opportunities and constraints to migrants who also bring with them historically specific practices and identities. Michael Peter Smith and John Eade, *Transnational Ties: Cities, Migrations, and Identities* (New Brunswick and London: Transaction Publishers, 2008), 12.

[51] For instance, John Connell and Chris Gibson, eds., *Sound Tracks: Popular Music, Identity, and Place* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2003); Sheila Whiteley, Andy Bennett, and Stan Hawkins, eds., *Music, Space and Place: Popular Music and Cultural Identity* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005).

[52] Ian Biddle and Vanessa Knights, eds., *Music, National Identity and the Politics of Location: Between the Global and the Local* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007).

the urban space, also examining the role technology plays.[53] An important contribution in this debate regarding black music is the book by Alexander Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (2005). Weheliye examines the links between black cultural production and sound technologies in the twentieth century, which invalidate the idea of black cultures as pre or anti-technological, therefore not contributing to Western modernity. In fact, Weheliye aims at showing that sonic black cultures have been central to Western modernity: sonic has been the principal modality in which Afro-diasporic cultures have developed. Indeed, black artists, producers, and consumers have used new possibilities generated by technological developments over time, and have created what Weheliye names "sonic Afro-modernity".[54]

In this thesis I analyse music as the art form through which cross-cultural and transnational exchanges were able to take shape in an unmediated way, in the sense that it could transcend language and geographical boundaries, thanks to the technological developments of radio and phonograph. At the same time, its development is profoundly connected with the spaces where music was produced. As Simon Frith has written the (live) music industry "is necessarily both local and non-local" because it has to happen in a particular place but it also deals with the national and international music business.[55] In drawing specific attention to black music it is my intention to examine how these expressions of transnational minorities developed in two European urban contexts.

The argument of the thesis builds on two main concerns. The first is the adoption of a perspective that allows me to build on depictions of black music that have a strict cultural approach based on discourses on blackness and identity. This line of research has made an important contribution to give space to the specificity of black genres of music and to black musicians within the field of research on music. Nevertheless, I find that these reconstructions have failed to give adequate space to the social dimension, which I think is a fundamental element for the understanding of music scenes in general, and of the spread of black genres of music in particular. Indeed, the diffusion of these genres took place in the context of specific

[53] In particular, Bull has analysed the meaning of personal stereos use in everyday life. Michael Bull, *Sounding Out the City: Personal Stereos and the Management of Everyday Life* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2000). This approach has been well presented in another volume Bull co-edited Michael Bull and Les Back, eds., *The Auditory Culture Reader* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003).

[54] In particular, Weheliye examines the role played by sound recording technology in changing music, which has become more ephemeral because separated from its human source while simultaneously acquiring materiality. Alexander G. Weheliye, *Phonographies: Grooves in Sonic Afro-Modernity* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2005).

[55] Simon Frith, 'Live Music Exchange', *Popular Muisc* 32, no. 2 (May 2013): 298.

urban music scenes and in the context of international music developments. The perspective that I have adopted has been deeply influenced by sociological works on the artistic fields, namely *Art Worlds* (1982) by Howard Becker and *Le travail créateur: s'accomplir dans l'incertain* (2009) by Pierre-Michel Menger.

In *Art Worlds*, Becker maintains that the artistic work is made by the activity of a number of people who cooperate to produce it. He suggests a sociological study of the arts in order to understand the "cooperative networks through which art happens," and the "patterns of collective activity" that form art worlds.[56] Menger also conveys this concept stressing the fact that the artistic activity is a job characterised by uncertainty whose existence depends on multiple kinds of cooperation and collaboration between people working for its creation.[57] Both Becker and Menger underline the fact that every form of art rely on an extensive division of labour that involves a variable number of people who, performing different activities, play different roles in the artistic network. In addition, the authors explore the relationship between the artistic work with the state, which plays a role in the process of production of an art work with its policies and laws. Further, Becker stresses the importance of studies that explore the creation and evolution of conventions, namely the ways in which styles, genres and innovations spread. My approach builds on this line of thought.

The adoption of the notion of music scenes is in line with a direction of studies that use this concept "to designate the contexts in which clusters of producers, musicians, and fans collectively share their common musical tastes and collectively distinguish themselves from others."[58] Following Becker, I conceive the music scenes on which I draw attention as specific art worlds that were urban and transnational. These had a spatial dimension (specific areas of the cities), and the actors that operated and formed the artistic network of cooperation were of different origins. I am convinced that it is important to include the various actors operating in this social network in addition to musicians, such as music producers, impresarios and instrument makers, to reconstruct the complexity of the activities on which a musical performance relies. Furthermore, building on the sociological approach my aim is to give an historical account of the changes that occurred over time and that transformed the music scenes.

[56] Howard S. Becker, *Art Worlds* (Berkley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1982), 1.
[57] Pierre-Michel Menger, *Le Travail Créateur. S'accomplir Dans l'incertain*, Hautes Etudes (Paris: Gallimard - Seuil, 2009), 9–10.
[58] Andy Bennett and Richard A. Peterson, eds., *Music Scenes: Local, Translocal and Virtual* (Vanderbilt University Press, 2004), 1.

Thus, I have structured the thesis by identifying themes and questions that show the various forces at work in the urban music scenes of Paris and London in the late imperial period.

Second, a significant element that characterised the development of the music scenes, is the fact that these scenes developed and help to develop encounters and exchanges between people with different origins in the two cities. They were cosmopolitan spaces.

The concept of cosmopolitanism has been employed in music research because it allows to examine the ways in which musicians have interacted in a context of movements of people and global flows of culture that articulated in specific places. Steven Feld's use of the term "jazz cosmopolitanism" for his study on transatlantic connections between American and African jazz musicians in Ghana, underlines its value as a concept: it enables to reveal "the vicissitudes of a music whose dynamic origins were overtaken, in terms of both acoustic and social complexity, by diasporic dialogues, global crossings, and transnational feedback."[59]

In the debate on cosmopolitanism, my work is in line with and is indebted to those contributions to the debate on cosmopolitanism which have aimed at historicising the debate on this concept that has so far been dominated by social science studies.

The work of Mica Nava has been fundamental in this sense, particularly her book on London in the twentieth century, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism. Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference* (2007). Nava maintains that cosmopolitanism was "part of the structure of feeling associated with 'modernity', that is to say, with a mood and historical moment which highlighted the fluidity and excitement of modern metropolitan life and culture and was characterised by a readiness to embrace the new." Moreover, "as a set of attitudes within this modernist frame," it showed "a loosening of national identifications and a positive engagement with difference." Nava's perspective differentiates itself from other social science works, because she privileges an approach "rooted in historical particularity" rather than one built on a conceptual starting point.[60] Thus, her work is an effort to historicise an issue which historians have tended not to address. This thesis contributes to this debate, by focusing the attention on music scenes.

Furthermore, Nava's argues for the necessity to understand racialisation "according to its historical locality and signification," in order to "establish the variations and specificity of race relations and cosmopolitanism." Indeed, she maintains that in the early decades of the twentieth

[59] Steven Feld, *Jazz Cosmopolitanism in Accra: Five Musical Years in Ghana* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2012), 59.
[60] Mica Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism: Gender, Culture and the Normalisation of Difference* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2007), 5.

century the relationship between the development of cosmopolitanism of modernity and cultural and national differentiation changed over the years but that "empathy, hospitality, inclusivity, conviviality and the allure of difference in English culture have always coexisted with the most hostile manifestations of racialisation."[61] In open contrast to those works which have drawn attention to racial differentiation, her analysis is devoted to what she calls "visceral cosmopolitanism;" a term that she uses in order to indicate the "unconscious, non-intellectual, emotional, inclusive features of cosmopolitanism, on feelings of attraction for and identification with otherness."[62]

In her work, Nava highlights the importance of consumer culture in this process. A similar emphasis on this aspect has been put by another author whose contribution has inspired my analysis, namely, Judith Walkowitz's *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (2012). In line with the debates about cosmopolitanism in the field of cultural studies, Walkowitz in the book examines Soho's cosmopolitan experience as part of a "broader cultural project indebted to new ways of seeing and performing the body, to new media outlets and innovative forms of musical culture and connoisseurship." Following Nava, Walkowitz argues for the need to historicise urban cosmopolitanism, and proceeds in this direction starting her analysis from the late Victorian period when cosmopolitanism acquired a new spatial connotation as an illustration of urban spaces and their social and cultural contexts. Furthermore, she emphasises that Soho's cosmopolitanism was not static; on the contrary it changed over time and in relation with conventional norms and attachments to the nation.[63]

To go further, this thesis analyses specific transnational movements, connections, and exchanges, taking into account the fact that these contributions came from minority groups (blacks), – and also from an area of the world (the Caribbean) in a subordinated position (colonies or countries economically dependent on others e.g. Cuba). This aspect makes this process of exchange very interesting and poses questions about the ways in which the "South" has been able to influence processes of globalisation in metropolises, such as their multicultural character.

As mobility was one of the fundamental elements that characterised the lives and careers of these musicians, the question about how we should understand the diffusion of these genres of music arises. Is a national framework a satisfying scheme that allows us to grasp the

[61] Nava, 6–7.
[62] Nava, 8.
[63] Judith Walkowitz, *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2012), 6.

significance of the evolution of these genres of music that overcame geographical boundaries and cultural origins, and intertwined with one another? How can we analytically reconstruct these connections and give a picture that is not predetermined by ideas of supposed national genres of music? Hitherto attempts made by historians do not convince me because they have tended to adopt a national framework of analysis. This kind of national-oriented perspective prevails in both French and British historiographies.[64] For instance, Catherine Tackley's work on jazz in Britain is remarkable and has inspired me in my investigation, but nevertheless I find that the national-oriented perspective which she adopts, is limiting for the analysis of phenomena that are transnational in their very essence. Tackley's intervention in the debates on jazz, otherness and blackness in Britain, has the noble purpose of showing the diversification of performances of jazz, challenging "the idea of jazz performance as a utopian expression of identity"[65] – which I am not disregarding as unimportant. On the contrary I think that it is a fundamental contribution. Nevertheless, I believe that the process of blurring with regard to black identities, to which she makes reference, should also affect the national framework of analysis adopted. Therefore, in my investigation I adopt a specific urban perspective which through the analysis of cities like London and Paris allows me to give a sense of local, national, and global dimensions. Moreover, this approach allows me to investigate to what extent we can consider two globalising cities as laboratories for investigating the development of genres of music that were connected with cosmopolitanism as well as with processes of racialisation and commercialization of music.

The time span of the thesis is the late imperial period (1920s-1950s). Even if the arrival of artists from the Caribbean was more prominent from the end of the 1920s, I think that it is important to include the years which immediately followed the end of the First World War because it was the period in which black music spread in Europe. The diffusion of black genres of music in Paris and London in the aftermath of World War I was diversified. Indeed, various types of music reached the two cities from both colonial territories and from other Atlantic countries, especially the United States and Cuba. The national-oriented focus described above

[64] Recent works that adopted this perspective include: Martin and Roueff, *La France Du Jazz*; Jackson, *Making Jazz French*; Kelly, *French Music, Culture, and National Identity, 1870-1939*; Matthew F. Jordan, *Le Jazz: Jazz and French Cultural Identity* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2010); Moore, *Inside British Jazz*; Jason Toynbee, Catherine Tackley, and Mark Doffman, eds., *Black British Jazz: Routes, Ownership and Performance* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014); Jon Stratton and Nabeel Zuberi, eds., *Black Popular Music in Britain Since 1945* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014).

[65] Catherine Tackley, 'Race, Identity and the Meaning of Jazz in 1940s Britain', in *Black Popular Music in Britain Since 1945* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 11–12.

has been paralleled by studies which have drawn specific attention to the experiences of African Americans in Europe.[66] These studies are important as they have opened the way for the analysis of the presence of blacks in the European context. However, this specific focus can be widened to give a more complete picture, in particular regarding music. My investigation pays attention to music and musicians from the Caribbean as well as from the United States. The connections between musicians is an important aspect to be explored, given the evolution of black genres of music, especially in the first stages of music developments of the early twentieth century. In many cases, solo musicians and bands played various genres of music such as jazz, rumba, and calypso, all identified as "black" music by the audience. This blurring allowed musicians to learn and perform genres of music which had different origins, including Caribbean and Latin musicians that were included in repertoires.

The years covered by the analysis are intended to extend until the late 1950s, when changes at the local level (e.g. the beginning of the recording on location on the Caribbean islands from the mid 1950s and the returning to the Caribbean homelands of many calypsonians), and above all at the international level, with the beginning of the process of decolonisation, marked the beginning of a new period. However, at a musical and social level, it had also elements of continuity with what came before. The decades I take into consideration were characterised by openings and closures, which not only were exemplified through legislation, but also through reception and dismissal of black musical forms.

The research is based on different types of sources. Archival material consulted in archives in London and Paris include: documents about clubs, bars and cabarets, in collections of police archives and metropolitan archives, gathered both for practical reasons (e.g. issue of licenses, control of performances) and for problems connected to the clubs themselves (e.g. clubs irregularities, drunkenness, prostitution, fights, and other criminal offences); documents about foreigners related to issues of employment or immigration, and personal dossiers produced by government bodies such as the Ministry of Labour and the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

In addition to archival documents, I have consulted other sources which have been important for the investigation at the British Library in London and at the Bibliothèque Nationale de France in Paris: guides and books on London and Paris and their nightlife; journals, especially music magazines; interviews with musicians and producers that are part of the project "Oral

[66] Among the studies concerning this presence in Paris are Fabre, *From Harlem to Paris*; Stovall, *Paris Noir*.

History of Jazz in Britain" of the British Library. Furthermore, personal sources, namely biographies, autobiographies, biographical dictionaries as well as interviews, have been fundamental for the research. This multitude of different documents has allowed me to reconstruct movements of people in the music scenes, and to have insight into their personal experiences and their careers.

It is also important to consider the limitations of those sources that have their foundation on subjectivity and memory. The stories that these sources tell are to be considered as personal, influenced by both the past and the context of their creation. In the field of historical research, criticism has been raised concerning their reliability and representativeness. Since the 1980s oral historians have tried to define a methodology that could elaborate the proper use of these sources, and give oral history ideological substance, too. In the words of Lynn Abrams, the significance of oral history narrative is that, "it is a way by which people articulate subjective experiences about the past through the prism of the present […] The personal testimony produced in the interview mediates between personal memory and the social world."[67] In this sense, the interviews that I used in this thesis – but this consideration can also be extended to biographical sources, - have been important sources that tell insights on the variety of subjective experiences, including personal perceptions about the social world in which the subjects lived.

Urban cosmopolitanism is at the centre of the first chapter of the thesis. Chapter 1 builds around two main inter-connected elements: urban spaces for music and the urban cosmopolitanism of those spaces. The development of London and Paris as centres for local and mass entertainment made them poles of attraction for many artists who found opportunities to work in the two cities. Specific areas of Paris and London where spaces for entertainment were located, were frequented by people of different origins, thus these areas had a cosmopolitan character. Authors of guides and books on the cities noticed this cosmopolitan element and used it in their descriptions. The chapter makes an extensive use of these sources to show how the areas were perceived and how they presented themselves to those arriving there. This allows me to show that black genres of music spread in urban spaces that were not separated; on the contrary they were part of an urban cosmopolitan space.

[67] Lynn Abrams, *Oral History Theory* (London: Routledge, 2010), 7. Among the historians who made fundamental reflection on methodology and reliability of oral history are: Luisa Passerini, 'Work Ideology and Consensus Under Italian Fascism', *History Workshop Journal* 8, no. 1 (1979): 82–108; Alessandro Portelli, 'What Makes Oral History Different?', in *The Death of Luigi Trastulli and Other Stories: Form and Meaning in Oral History* (Albany: SUNY Press, 1991), 45–58.

Mobility is an intrinsic characteristic of the entertainment world, but in an era of rapid integration and increasing interconnectedness at multiple levels, namely cultural, social, and technological, it is highly intensified. In the second chapter I draw attention to the movements of musicians who arrived in Paris and London and played a role in the spread of black genres of music. In so doing, I show that these musicians entered into contact with each other bringing with them their personal experiences. Their backgrounds as well as the link with the music that preceded them appear to be key factors in shaping their musical careers.

Chapter 3 is dedicated to the exploration of the cooperative network of activities in the music scenes of the two cities. First, it takes into consideration the activities related to the making of the musical work: manufacture of instruments, music publishing, and recording. Second, it deals with people performing various activities connected to distribution of the musical work: owners and managers of clubs, intermediary figures such as agents, bandleaders and music critics. These roles were not static but they changed over time, and often overlapped with people performing various roles in the music scene.

The activities performed by those who formed this cooperative network were at the basis of the diffusion of any kind of music, including black styles. The impact that black genres had on music, reveals that there was a specificity regarding black genres of music in the music scenes, where, echoing Paul Oliver's words, the "phenomenon of 'black music' is profoundly evident."[68] Indeed, black musicians, composers and their music contributed to creating a transracial environment where exchanges took place and new sounds were created. I examine this process in Chapter 4. First, I analyse the practices of learning new genres of music through which musicians in London and Paris incorporated new styles into theirs. Second, I drive attention to the variety of perceptions of blackness in the music scenes, influenced by the presence of different groups of black musicians with different feelings about racial and national belonging, including an attitude of "indifference" towards racial issues. Finally, as "black" music had blurred meanings and musicians were asked to play different styles that were more popular at that time, I explore part of the debate that emerged in relation to the process of the commercialisation of dance music.

Chapter 5 investigates the role of the state in the music scenes. The actions that public authorities took were subordinated to the interests that they pursue, especially the preservation of public order. Entertaining activities were hosted in clubs in specific areas of London and

[68] Oliver, *Black Music in Britain*, 5.

Paris, which in many cases coexisted alongside with criminal activities. Through legislation, states tried to regulate the music scenes, both at the national and municipal level, even if it was a difficult task because of the large number of clubs which tried to avoid police interference. In addition, authorities were subjected to the pressure that specific groups put on them, and their actions were influenced by this pressure. This chapter opens with an analysis of the negotiation of musicians' unions as pressure groups that urged authorities to take actions in the interest of British and French musicians. This pressure included a request of intervention with regard to foreign musicians, therefore the second section of the chapter examines the policies towards foreigners and immigration policies which had an impact on the performances of foreign musicians in the two countries. Finally, the third section deals with the intervention of the State in the music scenes which its primary focus on the maintenance of public order in London and Paris, respectively.

Chapter 6 is devoted to the changes and continuities of the post-war years and the 1950s. The 1950s was the last period in which black genres of music spread in the context of colonial empires. The British and French empires lost territories in the years between the end of the Second World War and the 1960s. During the decade, the influence of liberation movements for colonised people and of Civil Rights Movement grew. Therefore, the post-war years and the early 1950s are crucial years which involved social and musical changes but also produced elements of continuity - not only in musical terms, but also at a social level, - with the previous decades that would be fundamental for other developments in the following years. In this chapter, I first explore the movements of people active in the music scenes during the Second World War and its aftermath. Those who stayed in the cities experienced many difficulties, while those who left and returned after the war found them changed. The second section of the chapter examines the flux of immigrants that arrived in Britain and France in the post-war years, with a special attention on new migrations from the Caribbean. These movements had an impact both at a national level with the introduction of legislative measures aimed at reinforcing the link with territories overseas, and at a local level in the two capitals with the difficult process of the integration of immigrants. The urban spaces of the music scenes are at the centre of the third section of the chapter, which examines the changes and continuities regarding urban areas and the spaces where new genres of music spread, in the late 1940s and 1950s, as well as levels State control, which were consistent with the pre-war years. Finally, I examine the process of the opening to new musical innovations and influences that occurred in the post-war period and during the 1950s.

The section Coda is dedicated to the emergence of the genre of rock ‘n’ roll, symbol of a white and urban youth revolution, that occurred in a context of another revolution: decolonisation. Despite its black origins, the spread of rock ‘n’ roll did not involve black musicians and audience. However, while contact between musicians and musical exchanges continued in the urban spaces, it took some time before they produced the results of contamination of newly born genres that spread in the following decades.

Chapter 1

The Urban Cosmopolitan Music Scenes of London and Paris

Every great city in the world
has its staunch adherents and admirers. […]
But it is quite safe to say that the grey old city of London
will muster as great a host of devotees as any.
Perhaps a greater host than any[1]
Victor MacClure
How to be Happy in London
(1926)

Sur le coup de minuit, le Tout-Paris monte là-haut…
pour voir Montmartre!
Dépaquit croit même que, le cabotinage aidant,
bourgeois, nouveaux-riches et cosmopolites
y viennent un peu pour épater les artistes,
pour se faire voir d'eux![2]
Jean-Émile Bayard
Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui
(1925)

Pierre-Michel Menger has written that throughout the modern history of the arts, the process of internationalisation of cultural life has given decisive importance to several metropolises, and this has increased with the growth of cultural industries.[3] London and Paris in the late imperial period were among the protagonists of this process of internationalisation. In particular, they became two important urban settings for the spread of black genres of music.

In the 1920s, Paris and London were capitals of two nation states and of two empires, but they also played a role as metropolises at an international level. In this sense they were actors that played on multiple stages, which intertwined with each other in the urban context. The cities were destinations for many people in the entertainment world. The spread of music as a

[1] Victor MacClure, *How to Be Happy in London* (London: Arrowsmith, 1926), 15.
[2] Jean-Émile Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui avec les souvenirs de ses artistes et écrivains les plus célèbres* (Paris: Jouve, 1925), 143–44. "
[3] "Le processus d'internationalisation de la vie culturelle a conféré à certains métropoles une importance décisive au long de l'histoire moderne des arts, et s'est amplifié avec la croissance des industries culturelles." Menger, *Le Travail Créateur. S'accomplir Dans l'incertain*, 540.

leisure activity resulted in a diffusion of urban spaces where music could be performed and listened to. A fundamental feature of these two music scenes is the fact that they developed in a cosmopolitan context, which is a crucial aspect in order to show that black genres of music spread in places that were part of an urban cosmopolitan space.

The urban experience was a fundamental element of the circulation of musical forms in general, and of black genres of music in particular. As Paul Gilroy has affirmed in the case of Britain, the common urban experience of various groups of black people facilitated cross-cultural exchanges, which were at the basis of the development of a new form of blackness:

> Dislocated from their original conditions of existence, the sound tracks of this African American cultural broadcast fed a new metaphysics of blackness elaborated and acted in Europe and elsewhere within the underground, alternative public spaces constituted around an expressive culture that was dominated by music."[4]

In urban contexts, these alternative spaces included nightclubs and cafés where musicians performed and met. They contributed to developing an underground musical environment in which black genres of music had fundamental importance, and which allowed them to profoundly influence the mainstream music of the time.

In this chapter I explore the spaces where the music scenes of London and Paris developed. I do so mainly through contemporary descriptions written by people who directly entered into contact with those spaces. Writers of fiction, journalists and publishers wrote guides and books on the two cities and their nightlife or about specific areas. Some of these (white) men were of noble origins, but more often they were members of the high bourgeois families and in some cases they followed their fathers' careers as writers. These works offer a lens through which to illustrate how music was perceived as a distinctive feature of both London and Paris cultural life. Furthermore, they are a testimony of how entertainment venues became central in the spread of black genres of music in the cities. Indeed, these books and guides give us insights into the places themselves, but they also allow us to identify the ways in which those spaces

[4] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 83.

were perceived, describing the areas where black music developed with a specific cosmopolitan character.

Since this chapter relies heavily on this kind of sources, it is important to define some of their main specifications. Firstly, they are subjective sources. The authors were influenced by their background, both social and professional, and by the cultural and social context in which they lived. These two elements had an influence on their perspectives, and on how they formed views and ideas on what was considered a desirable form of entertainment. In addition, books and guides were narrative products to be sold mainly to visitors and people interested in urban descriptions. Therefore, we must take into account the potential influence of this commercial element in their creation, which could also influence the language used. However, these sources provide an eyewitness account of the changing urban context and the perceived compolitan element.

For instance, the writers described social processes occurring in the music scenes, such as the changes and diversification of spaces for entertainment after World War I, as well as perceptions about the impact of state regulation. Significantly, they used a specific language to describe the urban areas for entertainment, referring to cosmopolitanism and internationalisation. I illustrate how descriptions were usually characterised by a certain degree of ambiguity as they oscillated between a positive idea linked to leisure and a negative idea of association with dangerous attitudes. The binary character of this literature is exemplified, on the one hand, by descriptions of the cosmopolitan character and liveliness of the areas thanks to the type of entertainment offered by the urban spaces. On the other hand, other sources convey the idea of a form of dangerous cosmopolitanism, associated with illicit economies, crimes and dissipation. It is worth noting that some of these authors made explicit comparisons between London and Paris, and several writers would use the latter as a standard.

The spaces where music was performed were part of this cosmopolitan setting. Black genres of music had specific places where they were performed, such as black clubs - which were part of a cosmopolitan urban space - and they were cosmopolitan spaces where music was performed. As black genres of music became in vogue among the general public, they attracted a mixed clientele even if they were born as places oriented to a specific black clientele.

This analysis allows me to give a more complex view of the history of black genres of music, in particular with regard to the contexts in which they developed. In line with attempts that have

recently explored these areas as "cosmopolitan spaces,"[5] in directing attention to the spaces where black genres of music spread, I contend that spaces such as black clubs were not separated from the areas in which they were located, inhabited by a heterogeneous population. On the contrary, they were part of these areas and were characterised by this variety. My investigation is a twofold attempt to overcome works that have concentrated attention on specific groups without contextualising their analysis in a broader spatial context and works that have adopted a national-oriented perspective.[6]

This chapter firstly explores the areas of the cities where the music scenes developed: Montmartre and Montparnasse in Paris, and the West End of London, and Soho in particular. Secondly, it draws attention to spaces where music was performed, especially nightclubs and the so-called black clubs, which were cosmopolitan spaces where black genres of music spread. Finally, it examines other urban spaces that where important meeting places for musicians and for people working in the music scenes, such as bars and cafés, and streets.

[5] Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism*; Walkowitz, *Nights Out*.
[6] I am referring to, for instance, Shack, *Harlem in Montmartre*; Stovall, *Paris Noir*; Jackson, *Making Jazz French*; Toynbee, Tackley, and Doffman, *Black British Jazz*.

In both Paris and London, specific areas of the cities were the settings of the music scenes that had developed since the last decades of the nineteenth century, with a boom during the first decade of the twentieth century. As Jerry White has observed in the case of London, in those years the elements that constituted the city's nightlife had already emerged, such as restaurants, cafés, nightclubs, and cinemas.[7] This observation can be extended to Paris, too, helping to further understand the continuity in the development of the music scenes that were an important part of the nightlife in the two capitals. Part of this continuity was exemplified by the areas in which the music scenes took place: the West End of London, in particular Soho, and Montmartre and Montparnasse in Paris. Nevertheless, underlining this continuity does not imply that the urban space did not change over time. On the contrary the areas experienced transformations, linked to multiple factors such as the construction of leisure industries that included dance clubs and cinemas as a new form of entertainment.

Nightlife in London was characterised by a diversification of the spaces which offered entertainment. This diversification was mostly related to the audience to various venues and shows were directed to.[8] Music halls had emerged during the Victorian age as spaces for mass entertainment, and by the onset of the war, these had been paralleled and in many cases replaced by variety theatres where an entrance fee was charged and drinking was not allowed. Upper classes attended shows at big theatres, large elegant restaurants and hotels, which organised shows in their ballrooms, and dance clubs that owned their own premises and provided regular dancing. Some of these fashionable establishments included the Ciro's Club in Orange Street and the 400 Club in Old Bond Street in the West End. The popularity of dance music from the United States brought with it the emergence of new spaces for dancing for mass audiences such as the "palais de danse", permanent dance halls that aimed at catering a large lower-middle-class audience offering dance floors, orchestras of musicians and other facilities such as cafés and restaurants. The first palais was the Hammersmith Palais which opened its doors in West

[7] Jerry White, *London in the Twentieth Century: A City and Its People* (London: Viking, 2001), 327.
[8] On entertainment in London before the First World War see among others: David F. Chesire, *Music Hall in Britain* (New Abbot: David & Charles, 1974); Peter Bailey, *Popular Culture and Performance in the Victorian City* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998); Andrew Horrall, *Popular Culture in London c.1890-1918. The Transformation of Entertainment* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2001).

London in 1919. In addition, cinema continued its rise as one of the main forms of entertainment and the number of cinemas increased in the interwar years.[9]

After the First World War, small clubs emerged alongside larger spaces of entertainment. Soho was the area where many unregistered small clubs opened, often in basements, and were crucial spaces for the spread of black genres of music. Clubs often had different names which referred to the kind of music offered; for example, the Havana Club and the Cuba Club in London where places in which bands played Cuban music in their sets. Judith Walkowitz has indicated two factors that exemplify the continuity in Soho over the period: "the persistence of Soho's seedy urban fabric and its residential immigrant community." As she has observed, Soho was an area that, despite the decline in population between 1900 and 1939, was populated by first and second generation immigrants and was redeveloped during the interwar years.[10]

The Parisian nightlife was also diversified by the emergence of a vast array of differing forms of entertainment. Music-halls and theatres such as Folies Bergère, Moulin Rouge, Olympia had appeared at the end of the nineteenth century. These large performance spaces had succeeded to the *cafés-concerts* as venues that offered a variety of entertainment including dancing shows, comic acts, circuses, and operettas to a primarily middle-class bourgeois audience. They were located near the *grands boulevards* and in Montmartre. In the interwar years, jazz became a regular fixture of the music-hall repertoire, especially at venues such as Les Ambassadeurs located off the Champs-Élysées which was home to American revues, including the all-black show *Blackbirds*, and at Le Casino de Paris located in Rue de Clichy, which featured American-inspired French shows but also a variety of foreign acts. As Jeffrey Jackson has affirmed, "performances exhibited an international character" and foreign entertainment, which was an integral part of music-hall shows, featured an orchestral style of jazz.[11] Music-halls became spaces for the affirmation of both French stars including Maurice Chevalier et Edith Piaf and foreign artists such as the African American dancer Josephine Baker. The latter would become a successful performer in Paris with the black show *La Revue Nègre* which opened in 1925 at the Champs-Élysées Theatre, and soon afterwards a star at Folies Bergère. Baker was one of the greatest symbols of the success of black theatrical shows

[9] On the development of the entertainment industry and places for entertainment in the interwar years see: James Nott, *Music for the People: Popular Music and Dance in Interwar Britain* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2002); James Nott, *Going to the Palais: A Social And Cultural History of Dancing and Dance Halls in Britain, 1918-1960* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2015); John Mullen, *The Show Must Go On! Popular Song in Britain During the First World War* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2015).
[10] Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 10–11.
[11] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 105–9.

in the entertainment circuit, bringing black performers to Paris and other European metropolises.

Alongside music-halls and theatres, cabarets and nightclubs were crucial spaces in the Parisian entertainment scene. The spread of dance music in the 1920s was at the basis of the popularity of the *bals musettes* - affordable venues where people danced to the rhythm of accordions and violons, - but also of small nightclubs in Montmartre where black American musicians started to perform. In addition, cafés, bars and restaurants of both high and low level offered musical shows. Elegant restaurants in the 1920s began featuring dancing shows at supper time, such as the Café de Paris, Maxim's and Le Bœuf sur Toit located in the prestigious areas of Opéra, Palais Royal, and Champs-Élysées. These were specifically meant for a wealthy clientele from the upper-classes. Furthermore, cinemas also played an important role in Parisian entertainment scene for an audience of all social classes.[12]

During the interwar years, black musicians performed in both exclusive clubs and small clubs that had recently opened in Montmartre and Montparnasse. Both areas underwent a social transformation with Montmartre attracting tourists, especially English and American visitors, thanks to the arrival of black musicians and performers from the United States. They took the place of bohemian artists and writers who populated Montmartre before the war, who, in response to the commercial exploitation of the area, moved to the Left Bank of the Seine and Montparnasse. Nonetheless, the latter would also become another crucial area of Parisian nightlife where black genres of music spread, especially Caribbean music. Because of the vast array of entertainment available, these areas attracted both workers and clientele from all over the world.

The outbreak of the First World War was a crucial moment in the context of continuity of development of the leisure industry in urban spaces. The first months of the war brought a temporary halt to the liveliness of entertainment life in both Paris and London, in particular because of the shortage of resources and the mobilisation of soldiers.

"Tous le monde est parti à la guerre" spoke an ironic sign on the shutters of a closed shop in Montmartre.[13] When the war was declared in August 1914, many music establishments in Paris

[12] Shack, *Harlem in Montmartre*, 51–55. On the development of the entertainment scene in Paris before and after the war see: Charles Rearick, *Pleasures of the Belle Époque: Entertainment and Festivity in Turn-of-the-Century France* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1985); Phillip Dennis Cate and Mary Lewis Shaw, eds., *The Spirit of Montmartre: Cabarets, Humor, and the Avant-Garde, 1875-1905* (New Brunswick: Jane Voorhees Zimmerli Art Museum, 1996); Jerrold Seigel, *Bohemian Paris: Culture, Politics, and the Boundaries of Bourgeois Life, 1830-1930* (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1999).
[13] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 101.

had already closed for the summer holidays and those that were still open quickly closed. As a result, at the beginning of September - the normal opening time for the new season, - music establishments remained closed. With the victory of the Battle of the Marne in mid-September, Paris was saved from occupation, and citizens began returning to the city. Even if uncertainty remained about a rapid end to the war, the need for rebuilding everyday life emerged. As Regina Sweeney has examined, the concept of "normalité" was at the centre of the debate between those who argued that normality should be limited to economics and should not include entertainment in wartime, and those who included it as an important part of normal life, as well as a way to support morale of civilians.[14] The latter prevailed: after negotiations the police and the entertainment industry directors settled on an agreement allowed for the reopening of establishments for entertainment enacted on 23rd November 1914. The agreement defined that establishments could reopen from the end of November; closing time would be 11 p.m.; that 5% of the receipts would go to charities; and that the police had a right to review programmes, and that these should have patriotic content.[15] Significantly, this decision came before the national government returned to the city. Most establishments reopened within the first year of the war, and despite the difficulties and insecurity, the music entertainment industry in Paris flourished. As Sweeney has underlined, this was mostly due to the crucial role played by this industry in Paris during the Belle Époque, defining its very way of life.[16]

With the outbreak of the war many foreign tourists left Paris, and by early 1915 the population of Paris consisted primarily of French citizens. However, after the United States entered the war, American soldiers arrived in Europe, and their presence on French soil had an important influence over the entertainment scene. For instance, it began to be felt as through a change to the shape of the areas within Paris, especially in the case of Montmartre. With regard to this aspect, the writer and journalist Jean Émile-Bayard[17] wrote that before the end of the war Montmartre was invaded by American soldiers, and referred to this through common American nicknames. This presence made the selling of liquor a good business:

[14] Regina M. Sweeney, *Singing Our Way to Victory: French Cultural Politics and Music During the Great War* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2001), 137–67.
[15] APP, BA/1/614 Rapport du 23 Novembre 1914 sur les demandes de réoverture des sales
[16] Sweeney, *Singing Our Way to Victory*, 138.
[17] Jean-Émile Bayard (1893-1943) wrote various books on Paris and worked for the journal *Le Matin*. He was the son of Émile Bayard (1868-1937) writer, art historian and nominated "inspecteur de l'enseignement des beaux-arts et des musées" by the French Ministry of Public Education, and grandson of the illustrator Émile-Antoine Bayard. Bayard Emile AN LH/148/10; Bayard Emile AN LH/148/9

> Montmartre qui, pendant la guerre porta le deuil de ses morts, bien avant la signature de l'Armistice sera bientôt envahi par le *tommy* et le *sammy* démobilisés ou non. La Place du Tertre deviendra une 'affaire' pour ses débits de vins.[18]

During hostilities, the authorities adopted restrictive measures with regard to public premises selling liquor. These were felt more heavily in London where restrictions regarding club opening hours had already been imposed before the war. With the enactment of the Defence of Realm Act (DORA) and its Liquor Control Regulations (1915), opening times and the supply of liquor were further restricted by imposing the closure of pubs and clubs at 9 o'clock in the evening. Nightclubs could stay opened until midnight as long as no drink was served after 9 pm. This in turn had the consequence of driving the consumption of liquor underground. A great number of unregistered clubs opened up in basements which also attracted illicit forms of pleasure, such as gambling and prostitution. The limitations continued after the end of the war, even if in 1921 a liberalisation of licensing laws extended opening hours.[19]

In London, the measures taken during the war affected the activities of clubs more than they did in Paris. In Paris, the closing time of drinking places and public spaces for amusement was 2 o'clock in the morning, as Article 1 of the ordinance enacted by the Parisian Préfecture de Police in March 1921 established.[20] After the war, foreign populations from all over the world continued to arrive in London and Paris areas for leisure and work. However, in London the wartime restrictions continued to operate and, as a result, illegal nigthclubs proliferated. As Walkowitz has written, "prohibition-like conditions proved a goldmine for twenties proprietors of nightclubs, who attempted to impart an increasingly transatlantic flavour to London's dives. […] For a time, African American musicians were heavily recruited en masse to Soho and West End nightclubs to replace the German bands banished during the war."[21]

Thus, during the years that followed the end of the First World War the entertainment scenes experienced changes that made them different compared to the pre-war years.

This difference was felt by authors writing about nightlife in the two cities. In 1921, the writer Ralph Nevill wrote *Mayfair and Montmartre*, a book that compared the two areas.

[18] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 103.
[19] The opening hours in 1915 were from 12 noon to 2.30 p.m., and from 6 to 9 p.m. In 1921 they were from 11 a.m. to 2.30 p.m. and from 5.30 to 11 p.m. See White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 332.
[20] APP 155/W/98 Ordonnance 15 Mars 1921.
[21] Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 216.

Coming from an English noble family, Nevill wrote books on various themes, such as London's clubs, fashion and sports, among which a book that was dedicated to his mother Lady Dorothy Walpole who was a writer and horticulturist.[22] In the volume published in 1921 he wrote about Montmartre describing how the war had stopped the animated nightlife of the area and how it had regained its liveliness after the end of the hostilities:

> Just before the war, cosmopolitan haunts of facile pleasure had completely dominated Montmartre, where those fond of nocturnal rambles could wander from cabaret to cabaret till dawn. The war put a stop to all this, and owing to the shortage of coal, the night restaurants were obliged to close down after the Armistice. […] With increased liberty as to hours, the nocturnal revellers are once more flocking to the "Hill" much as they did before the war. Montmartre, indeed, bids fair to recover all its old gaiety and independence, while its streets abound in cabarets bearing strange names.[23]

It is interesting to note that in this extract Nevill described places for amusement in Montmartre using the word "cosmopolitan", which indicates that he considered the fact that people of different origins frequented those places as one of their distinctive features.

Several writers noticed the changes and the differences with the previous decades. For instance, the British journalist Sidney Theodore Felstead in his book *The Underworld of London* (1923) well described this transformation and made reference to structural changes such as the spread of new forms of entertainment, especially cinemas.

> The night life of London is changing out of all recognition. Gone for ever are the old hunts of the Bohemian world […]. In their places have arisen gigantic tea-shops, where theatre- and cinema-goers take their family after the matinées. The old haunts of the night birds are gradually

[22] Ralph Nevill, *The Life & Letters of Lady Dorothy Nevill* (London: Methuen, 1919), https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b3728010;view=1up;seq=9; Marilyn Bailey Ogilvie and Joy Dorothy Harvey, eds., 'Nevill, Lady Dorothy Frances (Walpole)', in *The Biographical Dictionary of Women in Science. Pioneering Lives from Ancient Times to the Mid-20th Century L-Z* (New York and London: Routledge, 2000).
[23] Ralph Nevill, *Mayfair and Montmartre* (London: Methuen, 1921), 207.

> being pushed into the back streets, where rents are cheaper and public scrutiny less keen. A few of them still keep their end up.[24]

An additional element that emerges very clearly in this description is the tendency of spaces for amusement opened during the night to go underground by being "pushed into the back streets." Felstead wrote various books on subjects linked to unrevealed aspects, such as the work of German spies during the war and criminals,[25] and his book on London fit into a literary genre that was in vogue at that time. Literature on the "underworld" of metropolises flourished in the nineteenth century, and was devoted to the social investigation of those sectors of the urban population who lived life on the margins, usually connected to issues of crime and poverty. Reference to darkness was a consistent symbol used to express a part of society that was usually covered. This literature had been created by social journalists and authors of fiction, and it concentrated on poverty, crimes and illegal activities linked to sex and drugs. It explored figures such as thieves, prostitutes, drunks and murderers.[26]

In some cases, writers drew direct comparisons between London and Paris. For example, Ralph Nevill in his book clearly underlined the difference between the two cities after the war. While restrictive measures had made London lose its liveliness, Paris kept its vibrancy:

> The Paris of pre-war days was a different Paris from that of to-day; the changes however, are not so great as those to be observed in London, which rigorous and quite unnecessary austerity has made into the dullest city in the world. The strain and suffering of the long struggle have left their traces upon the gay city, but they have not impaired the charms of the Boulevards, the gracefulness of the women, the deep blue of the Paris sky, and the merry, careless, exciting disposition of the Parisians generally. The man or woman of the people has a totally

[24] Sidney Theodore Felstead, *The Underworld of London* (London: Murray, 1923), 7.
[25] Sidney Theodore Felstead, *German Spies at Bay. Being an Actual Record of the German Espionage in Great Britain During the Years 1914-1918* (London: Hutchinson, 1920); Sidney Theodore Felstead, *Famous Criminals and Their Trials Intimate Revelations Compiled from the Papers of Sir Richard Muir, Late Senior Counsel to the British Treasury* (New York: George H. Doran, 1926).
[26] Among books devoted to the underworld published in the early twentieth century are: Thomas Holmes, *London's Underworld* (London: J. M. Dent & Sons, 1912); Harry J. Greenwall, *The Underworld of Paris* (London: Stanley Paul, 1921); Alfred Morain, *The Underworld of Paris. Secrets of the Sûrete* (London: Jarrolds, 1930). The interest in these subjects and in the literary genre has continued until nowadays, see for example: Judith Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight: Narratives of Sexual Danger in Late-Victorian London* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1992); Drew D. Gray, *London's Shadows: The Dark Side of the Victorian City* (London and New York: Continuum, 2010); Dominique Kalifa, *Les Bas-Fonds. Histoire D'un Imaginaire*, Seuil (Paris, 2013).

> different outlook upon life from that which prevails across the channel.[27]

Nevill described this state of things as specific to London if compared with other European capitals, and in contrast with the "Wonderful London" that he observed the press tended to celebrate. For him, the difference in the possibilities that people had to enjoy their leisure time with regard to the pre-war years was so evident that it seemed that Great Britain had lost the war:

> I sometimes wonder if, after all, we really did win the war. To judge by the present state of London we have lost it, and are being treated as a beaten people by some austere conqueror. The truth is that we are dragooned and policed as no civilized nation has ever been before. Told when we are to leave our clubs, and go to bed; told when we are not to drink (soon it will be what we are to drink); and turned out of the theatres, which the authorities have so kindly left open, supperless to bed.[28]

The feeling expressed by Nevill was that State control of leisure activities through its legislation created an austere atmosphere, reducing the freedom of decision on how people can amuse themselves.

The writer of detective novels and thrillers Victor MacClure[29] in his book *How to Be Happy in London* (1926) also made a comparison between the two cities' nightlives, which resulted in a negative opinion about the actual condition of London that had become "a rather dull place" due to the measures imposed by the authorities.

> To the visitor who has had experience of Paris or of the night-time gaiety of many Continental cities London after midnight will at first

[27] Nevill, *Mayfair and Montmartre*, 161.
[28] Nevill, 116.
[29] It is unclear if Victor MacClure was the pseudonym of Thom MacWalter (1887-1963) or if his full name was Victor Thom MacWalter MacClure, see http://www.sf-encyclopedia.com/entry/macclure_victor

> sight seem a rather dull place. Anyone who has done the round of Montmartre […] can hardly be blamed for finding London tame in comparison with the city of the Seine. […] It is not that there are no activities carried on into the small hours of the morning, but that these, by reason of restrictions imposed on the public space since the War, must be carried on in a semi-private capacity by the individuals concerned. […] It is hopeless to compare London with Paris in such circumstances, when there is nothing in the world to prevent a Paris dance-hall or cabaret selling food and drink for all of the twenty-four hours if it likes.[30]

However, to be precise, the war accentuated a tendency that had begun a decade before the outbreak of the war, with the promulgation of legislation on clubs that had a big impact on their activity in Britain, and in London in particular. This shows a certain degree of continuity in the action of the state, as in France, restrictions on opening hours only affected clubs during war time, which then returned to their pre-war status quo.

With regard to specific changes in the urban shape of the areas a common tendency emerged: a large number of smaller clubs appeared in the entertainment scene. There was a higher degree of diversification of the spaces for music, as a consequence of changes in the forms of entertainment offered. Some type of venues started to decline, while others became very popular such as the palais de danse in London.[31] In Paris this diversification with the spread of small places was especially evident in Montmartre. In 1925 Jean-Émile Bayard described this change in his book on the area:

> Les cafés d'artistes, comme les cabarets artistiques évoluent. Les premiers, ne sont plus le rendez-vous des peintres, des poètes ou des littérateurs. Et les cabarets deviennent de minuscules théâtres où l'on produit des revues à petit spectacle. Les artistes de la Butte allaient au café non pour boire mais pour s'y rencontrer, pour y échanger des idées. Depuis la guerre, les apéritifs ont augmenté considérablement et les gains, dans le monde intellectuel, au contraire de ceux manuel, sont demeurés les mêmes quand ils ne diminuèrent pas.[32]

[30] MacClure, *How to Be Happy in London*, 97–98.
[31] In the case of music-halls as Jerry White has observed the decline started a few years before the war. White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 331.
[32] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 136.

For Bayard, the area seemed completely changed so that he had the impression that a part of Montmartre had disappeared to leave space to a Montmartre made of nightclubs:

> C'était la bonne époque, celle d'un Montmartre foncièrement gai, simple, intime! Artistes et amis d'artistes partageaient à la même table un repas frugal. Combien, le vieux Montmartre semble loin du dernier Montmartre! […] Tandis que le Montmartre – Pittoresque disparaît, le Montmartre – Joyeux, avec ses cabarets et ses boîtes de nuit provenues des boulevards extérieurs, s'agrandit.[33]

During the same period, in his book on London, Victor MacClure observed a similar tendency in the city where the spread of nightclubs was a phenomenon that started developing after the war, linked to the spread of dancing as a new form of entertainment:

> The large number of night clubs that have sprung up in London is of comparatively recent growth. Before the War such a thing was practically unknown. The craze for dancing, of course, has had a lot to do with the growth, but there is behind it, in addition, a distinct feeling of revolt against the rather grandmotherly limitations set by the authorities on public amusement. People who want to dance after midnight must do so as members of clubs, and there is nothing to prevent them dancing until dawn if they want to.[34]

Again, the restrictive measures of the authorities were criticised through the use of the negative label "grandmotherly limitations," and were seen, together with the vogue for dancing, as an important factor for the spread of nightclubs. This way, MacClure established an explicit

[33] Bayard, 140;141.
[34] MacClure, *How to Be Happy in London*, 107.

and direct connection between change in the urban entertainment scene of London and the intervention of the state on amusement.

A significant feature that characterised the areas where music was performed and that was emphasised by the authors of books on the cities, was the fact that they were cosmopolitan environments. In Montmartre, Montparnasse, and the West End of London, activities such as restaurants, shops and clubs were conducted by people of different origins, and these premises were frequented by people coming from different countries:

> Wonderfully cosmopolitan is the crowd of men to be found in the foreign clubs of Soho. English crooks, French, Italian, and Swiss waiters, flash bookmakers of Jewish appearance, and, indeed men of all races, spending the money extracted from their unfortunate victims. Occasionally you may even find a Chinaman or a Hindoo among those to whom gambling appeals.[35]

As this passage shows, writers usually used the word "cosmopolitan" to define an aspect that they deemed to be a distinctive feature of those areas, and the activities linked to amusement allowed the exchanges between people of different origins. Significantly, Jean Gravigny, the pseudonym under which the writer and publisher Fernand Aubier wrote several books,[36] in his book *Montmartre en 1925* described this aspect, stating that pleasure was the most practical form of internationalism:

> Les étrangers de toutes les nations du monde affluent là. Ils témoignent ainsi que le plaisir est peut-être la forme la plus pratique de l'internationalisme. […] Toutes les langues se parlent à Montmartre et le plus humble garçon de restaurant agit comme s'il les comprenait toutes.[37]

[35] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 21.
[36] AN 19800035/0383/51411 Fernand Aubier.
[37] Jean Gravigny, *Montmartre en 1925* (Paris: Montaigne, 1925), 44.

Comparing London and Paris in 1926, Ralph Nevill, too, emphasised that spaces for music in both cities had acquired an international character to the point that one could hardly distinguish the difference between the two:

> The music halls and night resorts of London and Paris have now become more or less international in character, the only real difference being that more freedom both as to the entertainment and the closing hours exists across the Channel than is permitted at home. Except for these and some minor details, a visitor from another sphere would scarcely be able to tell whether he were in England or France.[38]

The authors often described how this cosmopolitan element could be felt in the streets where different languages were spoken, but also in spaces where various kinds of dances were performed, as Jean-Émile Bayard wrote in 1925 about Montmartre:

> Ce faux Montmartre, c'est tout ensemble, Athènes et Babel. On y parle, à partir de minuit, toutes les langues sauf le français. […] Le champagne ou l'exdra-dry, joyeusement, pète au nez des naturels de la pampa ou de la jungle, démêlant, à moins qu'il ne les emmêle, toutes les langues et tous les idiomes. La danse, toutes les danses, y sont pratiquées dans ces restaurants plus ou moins anglo-américains, remplis de lumière, de bruit mais vides d'idées.[39]

Bayard's description of the places where dances were performed as spaces "remplis de lumière, de bruit mais vide d'idées" ("full of light, noise but empty of ideas"), reveals a recurrent comment that several writers made about them. The places were depicted as extremely lively, because of their interior design where lights illuminated the dancing floor (especially in the clubs, cabarets and restaurants which hosted an elegant clientele), and the noise made both by the music played and people amusing themselves. However, this liveliness was ultimately

[38] Ralph Nevill, *Night Life. London and Paris - Past and Present* (London: Cassell, 1926), 272.
[39] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 155–56.

considered frivolous and superficial, hence the use of the expression "vide d'idées" (empty of ideas). In addition, when Bayard wrote that all the languages but French were spoken, he portrayed the cosmopolitan element that characterised Montmartre in opposition to the French milieu. This opposition recurs in texts on both Paris and London, and reveals how this cosmopolitan element was also often described as alien with regard to the national context. For instance, in 1934 the French writer Paul Morand in the English version of his book on London, *A Frenchman's London* (1934), underlined this aspect referring to the signs of shops in Soho. He wrote that walking through the "maze of obscure streets" that formed Soho, one found that "surprising names, none of which are English, appear over the shops; you meet nothing but foreigners".[40]

In many cases, writers directly connected the presence of foreigners to the moral degeneration of the areas. For instance, Felstead in *The Underworld of London* (1923) stated that foreigners had "converted the West End of London into an international bourse, where sin and sorrow ruffle it with the best."[41] Significantly, Felstead used the word "international" to describe this element of mixing distinct from the national and local contexts, which had altered the area of the West End of London and brought moral corruption.

These sorts of "closed worlds" were sometimes compared to other areas of the cities where people tried to replicate the same kind of business but usually without success. For example, in 1925, Gravigny noted that in other areas of Paris, bars, dancing places and restaurants with strange names had appeared, following the successful model of Montmartre, but they did not last very long.[42]

In Paris, only Montparnasse was another area where the kind of entertainment under examination spread. Artists of the *avant-garde* who frequented Montmartre at the beginning of the twentieth century moved to Montparnasse in the 1910s.[43] Montparnasse became their meeting place, with cafés, restaurants and dancing clubs with low prices compared to those of Montmartre. The liveliness of the area made foreigners soon follow the artists and start frequenting Montparnasse, as Gravigny observed in his book:

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[40] The original French version was published the year before with the title *Londres* (1933). Paul Morand, *A Frenchman's London* (London: Cassell, 1934), 184.
[41] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 22–23.
[42] Gravigny, *Montmartre en 1925*, 11.
[43] Jean-Paul Caracalla, *Montparnasse: l'âge d'or* (Paris: Denoël, 1997), 12–16; Valérie Bougault, *Paris Montparnasse à l'heure de l'art moderne, 1910-1940* (Paris: Terrail, 1997), 14–19.

> Montparnasse prétend qu'il a recueilli tous les artistes de la Butte, exilés de leur patrie par les buveurs de champagne. Il a donc créé des immeubles pour abriter les peintres, des restaurants à prix modérés, des cafés où le consommateur peut discuter à loisir du grand art, et enfin des dancings très achalandés où le café crème, l'anisette et le citron pressé remplacent le champagne. Montparnasse a su imposer ainsi un nouveau snobisme, celui de la noce à bon marché. Les fêtards prudents y courent; les étrangers commencent de s'y montrer. Mais à mesure que leur nombre augmente, les vrais artistes qui ont fondé cette nouvelle colonie de l'art sont obligés de s'enfuir. Les étrangers ne rencontrent donc là-bas qu'eux-mêmes et ils n'ont pas la satisfaction de s'y divertir autant qu'à Montmartre.[44]

What clearly emerges in Gravigny's description is the fact that as a consequence of these movements of people, the areas of musical encounters were subject to change. In particular, the development of tourism and the arrival of foreigners created internal movements within the cities that transformed the areas, as happened in the case of Montparnasse.[45]

Jean-Émile Bayard also reported that in the years that followed the end of the First World War Montparnasse was in fashion thanks to the presence of foreigners who frequented the numerous artistic and literary cafés, bars, nightclubs and dancing places. The clientele of Place Pigalle in Montmartre at midnight used to go to Montparnasse where every day new entertaining places appeared. The arrival of foreigners had a significant impact on the French inhabitants of the area, who at first avoided the encounters with the newcomers arriving from all parts of the world:

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[44] Gravigny, *Montmartre en 1925*, 12.

[45] The field of Tourism Studies has traditionally been dominated by social science approaches but since the 1990s historical analyses of tourism have increasingly appeared, also due to the so-called cultural turn in historiography. Among works that have explored the history of tourism are: Shelley Baranowski and Ellen Furlough, eds., *Being Elsewhere: Tourism, Consumer Culture, and Identity in Modern Europe and North America* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2001); John K. Walton, ed., *Histories of Tourism: Representation, Identity and Conflict* (Clevedon, Buffalo and Toronto: Channel View Publications, 2005); Eric G.E. Zuelow, ed., *Touring Beyond the Nation: A Transnational Approach to European Tourism History* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2011); Eric G.E. Zuelow, *A History of Modern Tourism* (London: Palgrave, 2016). Studies on tourism in France and Britain include: Ellen Furlough, 'Making Mass Vacations: Tourism and Consumer Culture in France, 1930s-1970s', *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 40 (1998): 247–86; Harvey Levenstein, *Seductive Journey: American Tourists in France from Jefferson to the Jazz Age* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1998); Christopher Endy, *Cold War Holidays: American Tourism in France* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2004); Harvey Levenstein, *We'll Always Have Paris: American Tourists in France since 1930* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2004); Hartmut Berghoff et al., eds., *The Making of Modern Tourism: The Cultural History of the British Experience 1600-2000* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Benjamin Colbert, *Travel Writing and Tourism in Britain and Ireland* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2012).

> Peaux-Rouges et lapons, sud-américains et russes, anglais et polonais, japonais et allemands, africains et canadiens, à Montparnasse font connaissance pour la première fois et souvent pour la dernière…Races blanches et noires, jaunes et rouges, sémites et hindoues ou malaises, s'épanouissent aux terrasses de cafés multi…uniformes. Pris de stupeur à leur vue, au lendemain même des hostilités, les habitants du "Quartier" évitaient la rencontre des types les plus qualifies des cinq parties du Monde. Depuis, "l'acclimatation" s'est faite.[46]

Furthermore, Bayard described how on the one hand, people of different origins benefitted from meeting and working together: their encounters were short, usually lasting just one night, and were made possible by the existence of meeting places in the area. Bayard's writings reveal the variety of views that these writers on cities had. All these commentators were white, bourgeois, and had male perspectives, but while some of the writers were shocked by the least manifestation of difference, others, such as Bayard, seemed to revel in it.

However, Bayard also pointed to a downside to these changes in Montparnasse, namely the fact that similarly to what had happened to Montmartre, Montparnasse tended to become a commercialised area instead of being dedicated exclusively to French art:

> Si tous ces peoples peuvent trouver un profit intellectuel ou pécuniaire à se connaître et à travailler ensemble, par contre il semble que Montparnasse, après Montmartre, se commercialise au lieu de demeurer strictement patrie des Beaux-Arts français. En retour, sous l'influence cosmopolite, l'artiste professionnel français acquiert davantage de sens pratique…En revanche, il arrive trop souvent qu'il abdique les incomparables qualités, si jalousies, inhérentes au génie français![47]

[46] Jean-Émile Bayard, *Montparnasse hier et aujourd'hui. Ses artistes et écrivains, étrangers et français, les plus célèbres* (Paris: Jouve, 1927), 375.
[47] Bayard, 375.

Bayard's opinion with regard to what he called the "cosmopolitan influence" on French artists was ambivalent: it gave them the opportunity to modify their way of doing art, but it also often happened that they lost what he defined, with a nationalistic spirit, as specific French artistic qualities. This view was defined more clearly when Bayard made reference to black music performed in Montparnasse:

> Montparnasse – boîte de nuit – […], retentissant d'airs de jazz-band! Montparnasse devenu le Montmartre de la Place Pigalle! La chanson de Musette violée par des musiques nègres! Singuliers, maintenant, les boulevards du Montparnasse et Raspail lors de notre fête nationale du 14 juillet devenue…internationale! Il faut voir danser, en plein air, la "Babel modern mêlée aux nôtres."[48]

The words with which Bayard described the spread of black music reveal the negative idea that he had about it. The use of the verb "violate" to indicate that black genres of music affected traditional French music, the *chanson française*, testifies that he considered this influence very negatively, and this kind of judgement was common in the context of the spread of black forms of art during the interwar years. Furthermore, he made reference to the fact that national values were affected by external influences when he affirmed that the national feast day of 14th July had become "international."

It is interesting to note that in some cases, these areas were also compared, and it happened that the comparison was centred precisely around the cosmopolitan character attributed to them. For instance, Bayard in 1925 wrote with preoccupation about the possible transformation of Montmartre as a consequence of the arrival of foreigners by posing the question whether Montmartre would be defended against the influence of foreigners or if it would become a "cosmopolitan" area as Montparnasse:

> La Butte […] sera-t-elle ou non sauvegardée? Deviendra-t-elle, comme Montparnasse une Cité cosmopolite? La Pioche du Démolisseur et les langues étrangères l'abolieront-elles?[49]

[48] Bayard, 379.
[49] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 162–63.

The question revealed Bayard's uncertainty with regard to the need to protect Montmartre against the dual processes of re-building of urban areas and foreign influence, symbolically indicated with the image of a pickaxe and with foreign languages.

The reference to the cosmopolitan character of the areas that these writers made, partly corresponds to the concept of cosmopolitanism that Mica Nava has defined as "part of the structure of feeling associated with 'modernity'." However, as a "mood and historical moment" that underlined "the fluidity and excitement of modern metropolitan life,"[50] the writers employed the term with a dual meaning. They tended to put into practice what the historian Judith Walkowitz has written about cosmopolitanism in her book *Nights Out: Life in Cosmopolitan London* (2012), which I define as "dual cosmopolitanism." Walkowitz has maintained that cosmopolitanism had different competing meanings. On the one hand, a positive idea linked to the commercialisation of foreign products and to the pursuit of pleasure. On the other hand, the idea of a dangerous cosmopolitanism, associated with illicit economies that characterised a degenerate Soho.[51] This dual cosmopolitanism appears in a large number of guides and books written about Paris and London's nightlife in the 1920s and 1930s.

The positive idea emerged with descriptions regarding the liveliness of the nightlife that attracted people who wanted to amuse themselves in the two cities. For example, in 1925 Jean Gravigny invited people to discover the various areas of Paris, and presented Montmartre as the most original and liveliest area where at night the atmosphere resembled that of the celebration of the Storming of the Bastille:

> Chercheurs de pittoresque, explorez tous les coins de Paris […]. Vous ne trouverez nulle part la fantaisie toujours renouvelée que vous offrira la moindre boîte de Montmartre. Arrêtez-vous, à minuit, place Pigalle. […] A Montmartre, tous les soirs et toutes les nuits, on commémore intensément, avec toutes les variétés de l'allégresse, la prise de la Bastille.[52]

[50] Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism*, 5.
[51] Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 6.
[52] Gravigny, *Montmartre en 1925*, 12–13.

It is interesting to note that the reference to the Storming of the Bastille, the very symbol of the popular assault on conservatism in the French context, was used by Gravigny as a depiction of gaiety and joyfulness that one could experience in Montmartre. Furthermore, he described it as the residence of pleasure ("séjour du plaisir"), and added that people who at midnight did not go to the Pigalle area, did not know Montmartre, hence they did not know pleasure.[53]

The reference to pleasure is a recurring theme in the texts, which often made reference to people who sought to get all forms of pleasure.[54] In a book dedicated to the London area of Mayfair published in 1926, Horace Wyndham, a writer of novels and non-fiction, described the pursuit of pleasure as a "whole-time job" that people frequenting the area during the nights took very seriously.[55]

A few years earlier, Sidney Fesltead in his book *The Underworld of London* (1923) referred to pleasure in order to describe the changes taking place in the West End of London. The comparison with the mid nineteenth century showed how forms of pleasures had changed during the years:

> The West End of London is growing sedate in its pleasures. […] The boisterous, and comparatively harmless, pastimes of the mid-Victorian days have been displaced by more subtle forms of enjoyment. The harmless rowdiness which we used to know in those days has gone for ever; in its place have succeeded pleasures carefully arranged by men and women whose life is devoted to keeping track of the latest forms of human dissipation.[56]

Felstead's comparison with the past was not neutral. In fact he expressed a judgement about the recent forms of pleasures that people sought. In particular, he repetitively used the adjective

[53] "Montmartre est avant tout le séjour du plaisir. Qui n'a pas vu à minuit la place Pigalle, la rue Fontaine et la rue Pigalle ne connaît pas Montmartre. Disons plus, il ne connaît même pas le plaisir." Gravigny, 41.
[54] The studies devoted to pleasure have emerged in the field of cultural history and have taken multiple directions. In France several historians have researched the history of the body and the *histoire des sensibilités*: Alain Corbin, Jean-Jacques Courtine, and Georges Vigarello, *Histoire Du Corps*, 3 vols (Paris: Seuil, 2005); Alain Corbin, *L'harmonie des plaisirs: Les manières de jouir du siècle des Lumières à l'avènement de la sexologie* (Paris: Perrin, 2007).
[55] Horace Wyndham, *Nights in London. Where Mayfair Makes Merry* (London: John Lane, 1926), 5.
[56] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 2.

"harmless" in reference to past forms of amusement, which produced liveliness and indulgence but were not dangerous. On the contrary, the new forms of amusement were spread by people who pursued a dissolute existence.

This comment leads us to the negative idea linked to cosmopolitanism that emerged in books and guides on the two cities. The reference to dissipation linked to the search for various forms of pleasure, ran parallel to the description of the areas that people frequented to amuse themselves as spaces where criminal activities took place, and where a large number of people behaved anti-socially. Moreover, clubs and bars in both these areas of Paris and London were spaces where illegal activities such as gambling, drug trafficking, and prostitution took place.[57]

The language used by these authors put the accent on the darkness of the areas, on the vicious activities performed there, and on the immoral behaviour performed by people. For instance, Bayard wrote that the area of Place Blanche and Pigalle in Montmartre was devoted to satisfy all forms of vice:

> Marchands de plaisirs multiples, de "coco" et d'autres stupéfiants, grandes courtisanes et petites femmes, *girls*, vendeuses à la toilette, proxénètes, annihilent au mieux des êtres sans défense pour intéresser d'autant, "fêtards" provinciaux et étrangers. Ce Montmartre-là offre ceci de pratique: qu'il se met à la disposition des appétits et du vice le jour et la nuit.[58]

Further, it is interesting to note that Bayard pointed to the fact that it was provincials and foreigners that were to be targets of drug dealers and prostitutes. He underlined the presence of foreigners as negative, and adding people from the provinces to the category of revellers, he marked a difference between city dwellers and provincials with a sort of urban-nationalistic spirit concerning the municipal space of Paris.

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[57] Scholars have devoted attention to these activities, and historical works on prostitution, crime, and drugs regarding London and Paris include: Alain Corbin, *Les filles de noces: Misère sexuelle et prostitution au XIXe et XXe siècles* (Paris: Aubier Montaigne, 1978); Judith Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society: Women, Class, and the State* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1980); Walkowitz, *City of Dreadful Delight*; William M. Meier, *Property Crime in London, 1850 – Present* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2011); Terry M. Parssinen, *Secret Passions, Secret Remedies: Narcotic Drugs in British Society, 1820-1930* (Manchester and Philadelphia: Manchester University Press, 1983); Max Milner, *L'Imaginaire Des Drogues: De Thomas de Quincey à Henri Michaux* (Paris: Gallimard, 2000).

[58] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 157.

Victor MacClure in his book *How to be Happy in London* associated immorality with the existence of "come-and-go clubs" that were "resorts for women of easy virtue and man of no virtue at all." He maintained that the illicit sale of liquor was the "last evil thing about some of them," pointing to the fact that they were spaces where people performed anti-social behaviour. Further, he expressed a clear judgement about what he labelled as "the sinister side of London's night life," stating that it was not the creation of the journalist's imagination, but it was "perfectly real, perfectly horrible."[59] Following this line, the writer Horace Windham used a play on words affirming that he thought that Soho was a corruption of "So Low," stressing the image of Soho as a depraved area.[60]

This kind of language continued to appear in writers' descriptions over the years. An example of this is produced in the following extract from the book *A Frenchman's London* by Paul Morand (1934) which described Soho's nightclubs of low level:

> To-day Soho is full of second-rate night clubs, 'bohemian' clubs where the wine is mediocre, where they allow a few unaccompanied women, where people drink a great deal, where white ties are rare, where you see the sons of big families degrading themselves, walking-on film girls, men who are married and trying to hide it, and old gentlemen dancing with their secretaries, under the eye of a badly shaved maître d'hôtel and a porter with too much gold braid.[61]

Morand presented Soho as a place full of clubs of lower level compared to the elegant clubs of other areas of the city, writing that evening dresses ("white ties") were rare, people consumed large quantities of alcohol and even members of wealthy families were judged to behave with depravity. In addition, Morand alluded to sexual immorality underlining the fact that those places were frequented by men who tried to escape married life with unaccompanied women.

The reference to women and their attitudes in places for amusement was common in these books on London and Paris which were written by male authors. In particular, several of them created the link between female attitudes and the degeneration of the areas where a certain type of music was played, as Bayard did in his book on Montmartre:

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[59] MacClure, *How to Be Happy in London*, 113–14.
[60] Wyndham, *Nights in London*, 78.
[61] Morand, *A Frenchman's London*, 191.

> Et voici que, fuyant la rafle, les jupes haut retroussées pour mieux courir, les filles s'éparpillent tandis que, furieusement, mais harmonieusement, le jazz-band ponctue comme des cris à la fois d'épouvante et de joie, toutes les détresses et les ivresses… Voilà la musique qui s'adapte nettement à ce Montmartre usurpé, fallacieux, dégénéré.[62]

Bayard pointed to the excitement that women experienced dancing in clubs to the rhythm of the music played by jazz bands and underlined how this music served as a soundtrack for distress and drunkenness; explicitly associating jazz music with the degradation of Montmartre. This association between specific genres of black music and moral judgements was also present in descriptions that writers made about clubs; the spaces where these genres spread.

[62] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 157.

The diffusion of music as an entertainment activity led to the growth of the number of places where music could be heard and where people could dance in urban spaces.[63] On London, Jerry White writes that live music was the main activity that characterised entertaining life in the years that followed the First World War,[64] and this consideration can also be extended to Paris. The diversity and the liveliness of the music scenes of London and Paris made them attractive places for people coming from different parts of the world, including musicians and performers. This attractiveness was in large part due to the fact that the two cities offered places where music could be performed, and this was extremely important for the spread of black genres of music.

With regard to these spaces writers made moral judgements. For instance, in 1925 Jean-Émile Bayard described Montmartre as "the modern Babylon," full of different places where people could amuse themselves, as an irresistible pole able to attract provincial and foreign night owls whose only aim was dissoluteness:

> Ce Montmartre des bals, cabarets, restaurants, dancings et boîtes de nuit, semble le centre d'attraction, le pôle irrésistible vers lequel accourent, noctambules, provinciaux et étrangers. Le mot d'ordre de Montmartre, Babylone moderne, est : "débauchons-nous!"[65]

[63] Studies on leisure emerged in the 1970s in the UK and have tended to adopt a sociological approach. Over the years these studies have on the one hand created interest into specific issues such as consumption, sport, dance, and music; on the other hand, they typically abandon the investigation of general issues regarding free time. See Hans Mommaas, 'European Leisure Studies at the Crossroads? A History of Leisure Research in Europe', *Leisure Sciences* 19, no. 4 (1997): 241–54; Fred Coalter, 'Leisure Sciences and Leisure Studies: Different Concept, Same Crisis?', *Leisure Sciences* 19, no. 4 (1997): 255–68. Several studies have adopted a historical approach, such as the volume Rudy Koshar, ed., *Histories of Leisure* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002)., and specific works on Britain and France have been published, see for instance: John K. Walton and James Walvin, eds., *Leisure in Britain 1780-1939* (Manchester and Dover: Manchester University Press, 1983); Jeff Hill, *Sport, Leisure, and Culture in Twentieth-Century Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2002); Peter Borsay, *A History of Leisure: The British Experience since 1500* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Hugh Cunningham, *Time, Work and Leisure: Life Changes in England since 1700* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2014); Ronald Hubscher, *L'Histoire En Mouvements. Le Sport Dans La Société Française (XIXe-XXe Siècle)* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1992); Alain Corbin, *L'Avènement des loisirs, 1850-1960* (Paris: Aubier, 1995); Laurent Turcot, *Sports et Loisirs. Une histoire des origines à nos jours* (Paris: Gallimard, 2016).

[64] White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 332.

[65] Bayard, *Montmartre hier et aujourd'hui*, 155.

Both in Montmartre and Montparnasse in Paris, and in the West End of London, nightclubs and cabarets offered musical shows with bands. Horace Wyndham in his book *Nights in London* (1926) noted that the popularity of cabarets was also linked to the fact that they were open to anyone because they did not require their clients to obtain membership like nightclubs did. In addition, as Bayard wrote with regard to Montmartre, Wyndham underlined that the spread of music occurred in different spaces, such as restaurants and hotels which employed musicians to perform:

> Nowadays (or, rather, now-o'-nights) practically every hotel and restaurant that ranks above a pub adds one [*show* (a/n)] to its supper menu as a matter of course. Also, a matter of cost. It must, however, be admitted that most of them give a good programme as a set-off to the bill.[66]

In his book *The Underworld of London* (1923) Sydney Felstead also underlined this variety of spaces in the West End of London, with a harsh description of the kind of people who frequented them:

> We have it all in the West End of London to-day – certain night clubs which are nothing but houses of assignation; the dance clubs which carry matters along a little further; the sham restaurants and hotels where a horde of unscrupulous men and women gather nightly, seeking, like birds of prey, to batten on the failings of humanity.[67]

The language used by Felstead - especially the metaphor of the birds of prey - expresses his vision and his judgement about the type of amusement taking place in those spaces as permeated by immorality and degradation.

[66] Wyndham, *Nights in London*, 31; 33.
[67] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 3.

However, the restrictions on the opening times of public spaces led to people in London finding private spaces to meet and amuse themselves. As a result, clubs spread as they were the only spaces where people could amuse themselves after midnight, as Victor MacClure noted in his writings.[68] A report by the London Metropolitan Police indicated 1178 clubs in 1911 and 2656 in 1935, with a progressive increase in the number of clubs during this period.[69]

This was a common phenomenon that interested the urban spaces of Paris and London, where an increasing number of nightclubs appeared. Writers referred to this development as one of the main changes occurring in the 1920s. Jean Gravigny in *Montmartre en 1925* compared the situation of Place Pigalle in the last years of the nineteenth century with that of 1925: "en 1894, l'autochtone le plus renseigné m'assurait qu'il y avait seulement cinq établissements de nuit dans le rayonnement de la place Pigalle; aujourd'hui, ils se comptent par centaines. Une trentaine sont des établissements de haut luxe ou tout au moins de haut boucan. Il s'en ouvre tous les jours."[70]

The rapid change in the urban space created by clubs in London was well described by Horace Wyndham in 1926. Nightclubs had "a very similar history: i.e. registered one night, and raided the next. First, too much liquor, and then too much liquidation. Within the last twelve months or so at least twenty have come and gone."[71] In addition, he noted how clubs tended to be hidden: "they lurk in back streets; the premises are camouflaged as private houses; and entrance has to be effected through darkened doorways and along narrow passages […]. Altogether, they rather suggest that if they are clubs, they don't want the fact to be generally known."[72]

A few years before, Felstead had underlined this changing in the nightlife of the city, but he had gone further by linking the spread of clubs to black music. He described newly-founded nightclubs as places with bad reputations that had increased in number with the arrival of black bands and jazz:

> Nothing is more typical of the changing life in the West End of London than the crop of disreputable night clubs which have sprung up in the last few years. Only a few years ago any mention of a club whose membership was exclusively confined to the underworld and admitted

[68] MacClure, *How to Be Happy in London*, 99.
[69] TNA, MEPO 2/4458/52/GEN/204/3
[70] Gravigny, *Montmartre en 1925*, 43.
[71] Wyndham, *Nights in London*, 14.Wyndham, *Nights in London*, 14.
[72] Wyndham, 47.

> both men and women would immediately have called forth a storm of criticism. Such clubs have multiplied considerably since the days when negro bands and jazz music first emitted their discordant blare to the startled ears of London people. [73]

Felstead considered the spread of these kinds of nightclubs as the distinctive aspect characterising the change that occurred after the First World War, and which worsened London's nightlife. It is worth noting that he made a direct link between this spread and the arrival of black bands performing genres of music that were not known in London. Moreover, in order to explain this evolution, Felstead linked the negative change to American influence, which transformed the idea of the nightclub and damaged nightlife in London:

> Originally the idea of a night club was a place where people belonging to the theatrical profession could call when they had finished work about midnight – somewhere to have a little supper and meet a few kindred souls. […] The Americans began the type of night rendezvous which has brought the whole thing into disrepute. Even before the era of nigger bands they had succeeded in obtaining licenses for night clubs which were nothing better than meeting-places for the male and female denizens of the underworld. They succeeded in importing Montmartre into London.[74]

The explicit reference to Montmartre is interesting because it reveals that Felstead used Montmartre as a symbol of a certain type of amusement that he judged negatively as immoral and linked to an external intervention by Americans, which also brought a change to London's entertainment scene. [75]

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[73] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 3.
[74] Felstead, 3.
[75] On the American influence in Paris in the interwar years see for instance Jody Blake, *Le Tumulte Noir: Modernist Art and Popular Entertainment in Jazz-Age Paris, 1900-1930* (University Park: Pennsylvania State University Press, 1999); Stovall, *Paris Noir*; Andy Fry, *Paris Blues. African American Music and French Popular Culture, 1920-1960* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2014); T. Denean Sharpley-Whiting, *Bricktop's Paris: African American Women in Paris between the Two World Wars* (Albany: State University of New York Press, 2015).

As the previous extract shows, writers created a connection between clubs, leisure and black music. In both Paris and London, nightclubs where black genres of music were performed by black musicians appeared. Initially these clubs had a black clientele, which was diversified with regard to both origin and social position. However, so-called black clubs (the *bal nègres* in France) usually came to be frequented by a mixed clientele, as the genres of music that bands performed there attracted a differentiated audience. Black genres of music were performed in cosmopolitan contexts. Indeed, the clubs that entertained clients with black genres of music did so in areas of Paris and London where people coming from different parts of the world arrived for visiting or working. In several cases the clientele was quite specific, but the areas on the whole had what writers labelled as "cosmopolitan" or "international" character, and were not variants of black enclaves.

For instance, an article published in the journal *Paris-Soir* in 1930 described how people in Paris were attracted to *bal nègres*:

> L'histoire des bals nègres de Paris, c'est l'histoire de gens qui veulent se distraire ensemble et en toute tranquillité, et qui sont poursuivis de lieux en lieux, de quartier en quartier, par des snobs et aussi par de sincères admirateurs. Une partie des danseurs du fameux Bal Blomet, après que Tout-Paris y fut venu, s'enfuirent vers la Glacière, la rue de la Montagne-Sainte-Geneviève et le quai de Bercy. On les y poursuivit. Il semble que cette fois les noirs de Paris ont renoncé à se cacher et que, puisque les Parisiens aiment les voir danser, ils acceptent enfin qu'on vienne les voir danser.[76]

The article presented blacks as a separate group that other people followed in various spaces of Paris to amuse themselves. It referred to snobs who frequented the *bals nègres* because of the vogue of black music, and to those who were "sincere" enthusiasts for black genres of music.

The Bal de la Glacière mentioned in the extract, which opened in 1929 in the area of Glacière in the XIII arrondissement, was one example of a place that was initially reserved for people from the French overseas territories. For the opening night, the orchestra directed by the

[76] "Deux nouveaux bals nègres se sont installés à Paris," *Paris-Soir*, (10 Juillet 1930): 2.

Martiniquan clarinettist Alexandre Stellio was called from the Caribbean, and it included the violinist Ernest Léardée among its members.[77] As the Martiniquan journalist Paulette Nardal wrote in an article published in *La Dépêche Africaine* there was a mixing of people with different origins, such as the Caribbean, Guiana, and Africa, who had different social positions.[78]

The case of the Bal de la Glacière shows that many of these black clubs started as places devoted to a specific clientele, linked to the origin of the music played. However, usually in a short period, they became touristic places, especially when the genres of music played were in vogue. Located in Montparnasse, the Bal Blomet was one of the clubs that had this kind of development. As Ernest Léardée recalled, at the beginning it was a small café with the simple sign "Bal Colonial" over its front door. Once bought, the ticket (5 francs for men, and 4 francs for women) gave admittance to a big room, which appeared after a small entrance. An orchestra played at the bottom of the room and, on a large dance floor, a mixed crowd of people danced. Léardée underlined that in the club, even if blacks were the majority, there was a mixed clientele. In his own words, "boundaries and class distinctions are abolished," and it was the passion for rhythm and dancing that united people in the club:

> Vous découvrez là deux cents danseurs, se livrant à leur Plaisir favori sur la piste. C'est une foule hétéroclite, bariolée, où se remarquent surtout l'élégance, la recherché et les couleurs vives des toilettes des femmes. On y trouve toutes les races, noire, jaune, blanche, mais c'est la noire qui domine. Tout le monde danse avec tout le monde. Les frontières et les distinctions de classe sont abolies, et l'on se croirait à une cérémonie rituelle où tous les peoples communient dans une même passion du rythme et de la danse.

Furthermore, Léardée underlined the element of freedom that people could experience in the club without worrying about social norms and self-expression:

[77] Ernest Léardée et al., *La Biguine de l'Oncle Ben's: Ernest Léardée Raconte* (Paris: Éditions Caribéennes, 1989), 144.
[78] Paulette Nardal, "Le Nouveau Bal Nègre de la Glacière," *La Dépêche Africaine* XII, no. 14 (30 Mai 1929): 3.

> Les conventions et les hypocrisies de la société sont laissées pour compte, et chacun extériorise, dans une liberté sans contrainte, le feu intérieur qu'il porte en lui, sans se soucier du regard des spectateurs.[79]

Open four days a week, the Bal Blomet began to be frequented by "tout Paris" and its success increased especially during the months of the Paris Colonial Exposition in 1931 when the Martiniquan genre of the beguine spread in the city.

In London, too, black clubs were gathering places for black groups of various origins, but were frequented by a mixed clientele.[80] The weekly journal *The Listener*, established by the BBC in 1929 was the intellectual counterpart to the BBC listings magazine *Radio Times*, and in August 1936 published an article about a "negro club." The writer was Hugo Ross Williamson, who would become a popular historian and dramatist. He described the night he spent in a small black club in the West End of London. In this case too, the language used by Williamson reveals the moral judgement given to the type of amusement offered in the club, with common stereotypical descriptions of the music and dancing performed there, such as the use of the word "primitive" to describe the rhythms of the music and "orgiastic ritual" of the dance.

> When the primitive rhythms of the music became overpowering, and the atmosphere oppressive with heat and smoke, and the floor a packed mass of neurotics absorbed in the orgiastic ritual of the dance, their tall figures, performing a rumba as innocuously as it was a minuet, were a landmark.[81]

In addition, it is worth noting the specific reference to the rumba, which the author provocatively said that it was danced in an innocuous manner as it was a minuet.

[79] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 174.
[80] On London black clubs see Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 232–52; Marc Matera, *Black London: The Imperial Metropolis and Decolonization in the Twentieth Century* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2015), 171–99.
[81] Hugo Ross Williamson "In a Negro Night Club," *The Listener* XVI, n. 395 (5 August 1936): 250

When a professor started dancing, followed by a Jewish woman, "their *joie-de-vivre* repudiated the masochistic wail of the orchestra and, by its infection, compelled other couples to join them. The evening had begun." When Williamson's black friend arrived they "ordered, under his instructions, the drink which gave us the right to sit there. The complicated process by which the apparently illegal is made legal eluded me, in spite of explanation."

Among the black clubs of London was the Jig's, located in Wardour Street in Soho, which opened in the early 1930s and featured a variety of black genres. The Trinidadian drummer and bandleader 'Happy' Blake's band - formed by a rotating cast of musicians - was resident at the club in the mid-1930s. They played a variety of genres, alternating Venezuelan *paseo*, Trinidadian calypso, and Jamaican mento with jazz tunes. Jig's was labelled the "London's Harlem" by the press, and it was a meeting place for black people and musicians of all classes. As Marc Matera has noted, the name of the club used the racial pejorative label "jigaboo" and gave it a new connotation as a term of self-identification "marking a space of and for the cultural expression of blackness."[82] The clientele of the club was mixed, however, and Jig's was also frequented by visitors from foreign countries and people from the suburbs, young white English people, and all those who were attracted to black genres of music and the entertainment that the club provided.[83]

Around the time when Jig's closed in the early 1940s, another black club opened. The Caribbean Club would be one of the most popular black clubs in Soho in the post-war years and attracted a mixed clientele, as Stanley Jackson described in 1946:

> The whites do most of the drinking while the coloured men stand around quite happily and watch the dancers with quite, mysterious smiles on their faces. It is a background that never changes in the Caribbean; faces with the colour and smoothness of mahogany; chestnut, cinnamon, buff-yellow […]. All around, beating in your ears, are deep indigo voices like double-bass 'cellos and laughter as mellow as a ripe melon. The dance room is dimly lit, the floor tiny and surrounded by check-clothed tables. The three-piece band – double-bass, piano and electric guitar – is pulsing with joy and freedom. The music is wild, voluptuous, gay.[84]

[82] Matera, *Black London*, 163.
[83] Matera, 162–63.
[84] Stanley Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho* (London: Muse Arts, 1946), 106.

In a similar way to what Léardée wrote in the case of the Bal Blomet in interwar Paris, Jackson underlined that the music played in the Caribbean club expressed a sense of freedom, and his use of the adjectives "wild" and "voluptuous" was in line with common descriptions of black music - and black forms of art in general, - as linked to savagery and sexual pleasure.

Furthermore, Jackson underlined that not only was the clientele mixed with regard to their countries of origin, but also with regard to social positions. Indeed, the Caribbean Club was frequented by a variety of people including musicians who came to play after their work in other places, professionals in various fields, artists:

> A grinning negro with a needle-thin moustache waves to his friends and takes over on the double-bass. He has looked in on his way to the Mayfair bottle party, where he plays, but cannot resist helping to "spread joy" here. I join one of these tables and drink with a coloured dentist who has a fine practice in South Kensington. He is with an Indian who is reading for the Bar, a negro sculptor with a black beard and fine liquid eyes, and an engineer from Jamaica. We talk about the atomic bomb until a magnificent mulatto arrives and allows us to buy him a drink.[85]

As the writers of these extracts showed, black clubs were gathering places for black people living in Paris and London, and spaces which contributed to the spread of black genres of music. At the same time, their own existence or their appearance in the urban scenes were linked to the genres of music that bands predominately played, and that were in vogue at that moment. For instance, the diffusion of Cuban and Latin music in the 1930s was the main factor behind the opening of clubs dedicated to those kinds of music, such as La Cabane Cubaine in Montmartre and the Cuba Club in Soho.

Moreover, the guides and books on the two capitals showed that these clubs were urban spaces where people with different origins spent their free time, thus they were not black enclaves but places frequented by a variety of people located in areas defined as "cosmopolitan" or "international." In several cases, the authors made reference to sacred elements, such as the

[85] Jackson, 107.

article in *The Listener* which described the dancers as "devotees of a cult" that transcended class and colour and that made people behave in particular ways:

> In that club on that night there was, on the one hand, nothing to tempt the weakest vessel, and, on the other, every appearance of enjoyment on the part of most people there. Their pleasure, nevertheless, is manifested in strange ways. […] The majority on the dance-floor were devotees of a cult, performing their convolutions unsmiling and silent. There was a inner Mystery which, repelling outsiders, united its initiates in a freemasonry transcending class or colour; which made the fair girl with the aristocratic name, the insipidity of whose face was relieved only by its superciliousness, choose for partners none but negroes who would dance cheek to cheek with her; which made the Tottenham Court Road couple dance together like feverish lovers but neither sit together nor speak to each other when they were not dancing; which made the shabby young Cuban detach an expensively gowned dowager from her party as it entered, and, with no word spoken whirl her into the dance.[86]

It is worth noting that in some cases the writers, in addition to the reference to rituals, used the references to the "South" in order to identify a common unifying feature. In the article in *Paris-Soir* devoted to black clubs the writer described that in these places, people danced together in a supposed typical way of Southern countries, a term with which he referred to non-European countries:

> A l'heure du quadrille, il ne s'agit presque plus d'une danse, mais d'une sorte de cérémonie rituelle, d'orgie sacrée, où tous les peuples communient dans la fureur qui règne dans les pays du Sud. Et l'homme blanc, le Français cultivé à la manière gréco-latine, qui regarde, sent et pourtant n'est pas emporté par le tourbillon, reste spectateur, gémit de se sentir si peu, si peu barbare, d'avoir le sang tellement refroidi.[87]

[86] Williamson "In a Negro Night Club"
[87] "Deux nouveaux bals nègres se sont installés à Paris," *Paris-Soir*, (10 Juillet 1930): 2

Paradoxically, the article on the one hand described all the people dancing as if they were performing a ritual and were united through a passion that he suggested that it was typical of Southern countries. On the other hand, it presented white people as not participating in the dance that became a "sacred orgy," because they were not receptive to the vortex of energy that the music expressed and they were not "barbarian." Despite this paradoxical content of the descriptions of clubs, the descriptions of these clubs tell us that the mixed clientele also included French and English people, even if their participation could have been less intense if compared to other groups of people. The reference to the South is significant because it indicates that writers considered specific genres of music of those defined as Southern countries to be significant factors for the changing and the shaping of the urban space, and for the spread of new cultural forms, such as musical entertainment.

Besides places that offered musical entertainment, other urban spaces that were important for people working in the music scene, and which appeared in books on Paris and London. In this sense, we can consider these places as "informal spaces" of encounter where people gathered in their free time.

As in the case of nightclubs, several bars and cafés located in the West End of London, Montmartre and Montparnasse were frequented by people who had a bad reputation, such as gamblers, prostitutes, drunks and drug addicts.[88] Furthermore, bars and cafés in these areas were meeting places for people working in the music scenes.

Bars and cafés were spaces in which people working in the entertainment circuit spent their nights often after shows in big theatres and cabarets. For instance, in his autobiography *The Big Sea* published in 1940, the African American writer Langston Hughes recalled that during his stay in Paris in the early 1920s, the "Flea Pit," was a small café located in Rue Bruyère in Montmartre where performers used to go to in the late afternoon after work.[89] Hughes was one of the first people that the African American performer Bricktop met when she firstly arrived in Paris. In 1929, together with a Chinese man, she opened a small *bistrot* called Band Box where musicians used to go to drink as she charged them low prices.[90] This attitude was common and like Bricktop, other bar owners charged musicians low prices for drinks to attract them. The pianist Léo Chauliac recalled of a place in Montmartre called Le Fétiche where all jazz musicians gathered and where the owner let musicians drinking for free.[91]

In both London and Paris, there were bars that became meeting places for black groups living in the two cities. For example, Trini's café was a meeting point for black people in London located in a narrow street close to Denmark Street. The Jamaican trumpeter Leslie Thompson in his autobiography recalled that the owner Trini Mendez was a Trinidadian who had been living in England for a long time, and had bought the place together with a white man. Seamen from London docks, black boys and prostitutes frequented the café. Thompson also recalled

[88] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 109.
[89] Langston Hughes, *The Big Sea: An Autobiography*, 2nd ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1993), 153–54.
[90] Bricktop, *Bricktop* (New York: Atheneum, 1983), 165.
[91] Boris Vian, 'Jazz-Hot n.10 - novembre 1946 Léo Chauliac', in *Ecrits sur le jazz* (Paris: Le Livre de Poche, 2012).

that he went there because black people went there, and that the first period when he was in London he learned a lot of things about the West End thanks to his conversations with Trini.[92]

These urban spaces had different features often connected to the traditions of the areas, such as the diffusion of pubs in England, but also to the kind of people that frequented the bars. For example, Montparnasse was well-known for its artistic and literary cafés that had their walls painted and were gathering places for artists and writers. As various guides described, in addition to nightclubs the area was full of small bars, cafés and *brasseries*, which had a very diversified clientele[93] and people with different origins frequented these places of amusement. As Jean-Émile Bayard described in 1927, since the end of the First World War the number of cafés in Montparnasse had increased because of the arrival of thousands of people from every continent, who he labelled "*internationaux*":

> Montparnasse, dès la signature de la Paix, vit augmenter considérablement le nombre de ses cafés et restaurants, en raison de la fréquentation de milliers d'internationaux accourus des cinq parties du monde. Depuis 1918, beaucoup d'entre eux tiennent leurs assises au Café. […] C'est ainsi que les ango-américains se gobergent volontiers au *Jockey*, *Chez Rosalie*, au *Select*, au *Dingo* et au *grill-bar room* du Studio-Hôtel. Au *Strix* et *Chez les Vikings* se rencontrent surtout les Scandinaves. Russes, Allemands, Polonais, Tchéco-Slovaques, Italiens et Français "modernisants" leur préfèrent la *Rotonde*, le *Dôme*, et la *Closerie des Lilas*. Quant aux montparnassiens conservateurs, on les retrouve à *La Grande-Chaumière* et *Au Petit Napolitain*. Alors que les Parisiens de la rive-droite et de la rive-gauche ont adopté le *Lavenue* et le *Versailles* et le provinciaux, la *Taverne des Brasseries Damesnil*, *Monaco* et *le Vertige*, reçoivent une clientèle cossue "quartier latin" et montmartoise.[94]

In this description about the places where people of different origins used to gather, Bayard underlined that the cafés were frequented by specific groups, including Parisians, French people

[92] Leslie Thompson, interview by Val Wilmer, 11 August 1987, C122/33, BL NSA; Leslie Thompson and Jeffrey P. Green, *Swing from a Small Island: The Story of Leslie Thompson*, 2nd ed. (London: Northway Publications, 2009), 68.
[93] *Tous les amusements de Montparnasse. Adresses, renseignements, conseils* (Paris, 34-41 Passage Choiseul, 1931); René Bourzac, *Les Nuits de Montparnasse. Guide des plaisirs du plus joyeux quartier du monde* (Paris, 15 Rue Colette, 1931).
[94] Bayard, *Montparnasse hier et aujourd'hui*, 451–52.

from the provinces and foreigners. In some cases, the names of the cafés expressed this aspect such as Chez les Vikings, which Scandinavians used to go to. However, he explained that the separation between French people and foreigners in Montparnasse was "ideal," because in everyday life the supposed separation was not consistent:

> Il ne s'agit là, bien entendu, que d'une répartition "idéale" des Étrangers et Français, à laquelle l'actualité donne de fréquentes entorses.[95]

Bayard's description emphasised that the area was mixed, which was underlined by authors writing about cafés, who in several cases explicitly referred to "cosmopolitanism". For instance, a guide to Montparnasse described the café brasserie La Coupole affirming that its "coloured cosmopolitanism" made it the symbol of the area because its clientele included people from the far East, blacks, Scandinavians, Americans, and Russians.[96] In the basement there was a dance room in which several Caribbean musicians played in the 1930s, including the Guadeloupian bandleader Félix Valvert whose band was resident there from 1935 until 1937.

The use of the word cosmopolitanism to characterise these spaces is an interesting element which is worth noting, especially with regard to the relationship between black clubs and other urban spaces where black people gathered. Even if many of these spaces were born as oriented to a specific clientele, they were all part of urban areas described as "cosmopolitan" or "international." Moreover, they were themselves spaces that hosted a mixed clientele, and for that reason they were labelled "cosmopolitan". For instance, the location of the black club La Boule Blanche well exemplifies this aspect. The club, decorated by the artist Paul Colin, was located in a basement in rue Vavin underneath the bar Les Vikings that was the meeting place of Scandinavians but was also frequented also by people of different origins.[97]

I have hitherto considered specific places where people working in the music scenes went to and which were meeting places for various groups of people. Streets were other important urban

[95] Bayard, 452.
[96] *Tous les amusements de Montparnasse*, 20–24.
[97] Bayard, *Montparnasse hier et aujourd'hui*, 474; *Tous les amusements de Montparnasse*, 34–35.

spaces in the music scenes. Indeed, they were spaces in which musicians found work through informal connections, performed, and met each other.[98]

In Soho, Archer Street was the place where musicians gathered in order to find work. The London Orchestral Association, which merged with the Musicians' Union in 1921, had its headquarters in this narrow street, but it did not have any connection with the crowd of dance and jazz musicians who stood in the street searching for jobs in clubs and theatres, and whom the association had difficulties to admit as members.

Therefore, Archer Street itself became a gathering place for musicians. In his autobiography, Spike Hughes described Archer Street as a meeting place where musicians' talent "may be bought, sold and publicised." He recalled that if at the beginning the gathering of the crowd was linked to the London Orchestral Association, the greater part of those who stayed in the street "eating peanuts and annoying the police by obstructing the traffic," was constituted by young men who disliked the association.[99]

Besides being a meeting place, Archer Street was an important urban space in the music scene where informal exchange of labour took place. An article published in the *Melody Maker* in 1935 labelled Archer Street as the "Street of Hope." In the article the singer Pat Brennan described his arrival in London from the provinces. Without the help of a friend of his, who was on tour when he reached the city, Archer Street was one of the places where he went to try to find work. As soon as he arrived there he immediately understood that "the business done in the street was by way of personal introduction, recommendations and interchanging of addresses and telephone numbers." Brennan was not very lucky, though, for when he tried to introduce himself another musician mocked him for his accent, and Brennan walked away.[100] Yet, in many other instances this informal network allowed musicians to find employment, thus it could significantly help those entering into London's music scene from outside. For instance, in 1929 Leslie Thompson arrived in London, he was out of work and so he went to Archer Street. The first thing that surprised him was that the street was so crowded that it was almost impossible to walk. Thompson did not know anybody, and was the only black person there. He was even more stupefied when a man came to him asking where he was from and what

[98] Streets have rarely been adopted as the focus of historical analyses. Among the studies that have driven attention to streets is Leif Jerram, *Streetlife: The Untold History of Europe's Twentieth Century* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011). Another study concerning police action in late Victorian London with a perspective focused on streets is Peter K. Andersson, *Streetlife in Late Victorian London: The Constable and the Crowd* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2013).

[99] Spike Hughes, *Second Movement: Continuing the Autobiography of Spike Hughes* (London: Museum Press, 1951), 28.

[100] "Assault on Archer Street," *Melody Maker* XI, no. 108 (15 June 1935): 1.

instrument he played. Eventually, that day he found his first job in London playing in a band that performed at a Jewish wedding.[101]

The phenomenon of musicians who gathered in Archer Street searching for work was so popular that in 1932 a comic strip published in the *Melody Maker* made fun of it. The image showed a dance hall audition full of musicians waiting for their turn where two musicians from the sidelines talked together. The first said to the other that all Archer Street was there, and the second one answered: "let's go back there we ought to be able to book some gigs now!"[102]

Archer Street would continue to be a crucial space in the London music scene in the post-war years, too. In 1946 Jackson in his guide to Soho called it a "street club," frequented by musicians whose appearance showed the influence of American styles and fashion:

> The "street club" would be in full session. It forms a strange contrast to the sedate gathering of men inside the building. […] Most of the men in the street are jazz musicians and they are much of a type in externals. Baldish, hatless, be-spectacled, with long Teddy Bear overcoats or suits cut in the American style. They buy their shirts and ties in the Charing Cross Road shops which produce exaggerated versions of what is being worn in Hollywood.[103]

As Jackson noted, players spent a large amount of time in the street because they had the opportunity to find work by word-of-mouth, especially in case of "gigs," the engagements for only one night performance:

> Your pro has little sense of time. He will stand about Archer Street for hours on end and then adjourn to the little club or café for a chat or a drink. […] It is not time wasted, however. The musician's grapevine in Archer Street grows just as energetically as that of the waiters in Old Compton Street. He hears that there may be an opening for a sax with Jack Payne or that a new bottle party is opening in Kingly Street on Thursday and that the piano player has let them down. Nowadays, he is in no hurry to tie himself down to regular work. A "gig" suits him better because he will not pay income tax on it. There *is* an entrance fee to this

[101] Thompson, interview.
[102] *Melody Maker* VII, no. 84 (December 1932): 948-949.
[103] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 102.

> strange street "club." It is impossible to stand about for more than an hour without hearing some hard-luck story from a fellow-pro who has had a streak of ill-fortune. Big talk is as common-place in Archer Street as in Charing Cross Road.[104]

Streets were spaces where musicians gathered and met each other but they could also become places where conflicts between them took place. This was the case of the African American clarinettist Sidney Bechet who was involved in a fight with the African American banjo player Mike McKendrick in December 1928 in a street of Montmartre, which Bechet recalled to be linked to Northern musicians deriding him because he was from the South.[105] In the report about the incident the Commissaire de Police explained that the two started the quarrel over their employment as musicians in the early morning in the club Le Grand Duc. Bechet left the club and was chatting with other musicians in rue Fontaine when McKendrick met him again and drew his gun. The two men shot each other and the incident resulted in five people being implicated. Beside Bechet and McKendrick, three other people who had been passing by, were injured. A trial followed and the two musicians were condemned. Bechet was sentenced to eleven months in prison and was subsequently expelled from France in October 1929.[106] A few months later, another police report made observation about the club Le Grand Duc underlining the show performed by young homosexuals and the mixed clientele, and noticed that the information gathered about Bechet and McKendrick were positive.[107]

Streets were also spaces where musicians performed in order to earn some money. However, this activity could cause problems. For example, the London metropolitan police dealt with the phenomenon of street musicians in the mid 1930s, especially because of formal protests by citizens, as was the case of a music school in 1936. In September, the "Billy Mayerl School," located in Mayfair, wrote a letter to the police in order to complain about street musicians. The letter reported the "intolerable nuisance" of street musicians in the area, created by a "constant stream of street bands, organs, solo musicians" that played close to the school's premises, thus making teaching activities very difficult. The school requested police intervention in order to stop a phenomenon that was causing negative consequences to its business.[108] A week after the

[104] Jackson, 102.
[105] Sidney Bechet, *Treat It Gentle: An Autobiography* (Cambridge: Da Capo Press, 1960), 150–53.
[106] APP IC1.136.526 Rapport by M. Octave Legrand Commissaire de Police.
[107] APP/IC1.136.526/C.I67.7 37 Copie du Rapport forni par l'Inspecteur Monteils (8 Février 1929).
[108] TNA MEPO 2/5533/98

complaint, a police report noted that street musicians actually interfered with the school's activities, even if the complaints were exaggerated. Moreover, the report admitted that the police had difficulties in dealing with street musicians in the West End, because they moved away from the places where they settled when a police officer sent them away but returned to the same places after a while. In addition, there was no specific law dealing with this phenomenon. For that reason, an inspector asked whether it was possible to take proceedings by reference to the Metropolitan Police Act of 1839 that concerned public entertainment in the road that caused annoyance to inhabitants.[109] Eventually, authorities applied this strategy and started charging street musicians under the Act, as demonstrated by the case of the arrest of a street musician who was the first to be charged under that offence in Soho.[110]

This chapter has illustrated the process of diversification of places of entertainment in London and Paris in the years following World War I. Alongside cinema, the businesses that expanded the most were small clubs, including so-called black clubs, and new establishments specifically devoted to dancing (e.g. palais de danse). This process occurred in specific areas of the cities which were poles of attraction for people working in entertainment but also visitors. These areas were cosmopolitan because of the variety of both music establishments and people of different origins who frequented them. By relying primarily on guides and books on the two cities, the chapter has aimed at describing this urban and social process through eyewitness accounts. These male, white, bourgeois writers who referred to cosmopolitanism and internationalism in their writings, help to historicise the notion of cosmopolitanism itself. Their reference to it implied various and competing meanings. In this sense, the term "dual cosmopolitanism" has allowed me to further historicise cosmopolitanism as a concept, by revealing how in these works its significance oscillated between a positive idea of cosmopolitanism as lively modernity and a negative opinion linked to immoral behaviour and dissipation. Moreover, what has emerged from some of these accounts is a direct comparison made between Paris and London which results, on the one hand, in the reference to Parisian nightlife as a standard, and, on the other, in the emphasis on a process of internationalisation that the two cities had in common.

[109] TNA MEPO 2/5533/2A
[110] TNA MEPO 2/5533/6

Specific urban locations of Paris and London were at the origin of the liveliness of their music scenes, attracting many musicians from around the globe, who found in the cities the opportunity to build their musical careers.

Chapter 2

Variations on Urban Lives: Mobility, Backgrounds and Routes Leading to London and Paris

London is the place for me
London this lovely city
You can go to France or America,
India, Asia or Australia
But you must come back to London city
Lord Kitchener
"London is the place for me"
(1951)

Every time I look down on this timeless town
Whether blue or grey be her skies.
Whether loud be her cheers or soft be her tears,
More and more do I realize:
I love Paris in the springtime.
I love Paris in the fall.
I love Paris in the winter when it drizzles,
I love Paris in the summer when it sizzles.
I love Paris every moment, every moment of the year.
Cole Porter
"I Love Paris"
(1953)

Gene told me we were approaching Paris, and I swallowed hard and peered out at the red-roofed, close-set buildings. I wasn't impressed. Maybe I would have been if it had been one of those beautiful Paris spring days, but it was gray and blustery, and by the end of the two-hour trip, after eleven days at sea and too much champagne, I was kind of gray and blustery myself. A rickety, open-air Paris taxi took us to Montmartre, atop a hill above the rest of the city. It was a tumbledown little place, with red and yellow one-story buildings lining its narrow, twisting streets, and so many cafés and dance halls and bordellos as on State Street in Chicago.[1]

[1] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 85.

With these words the African American singer Ada “Bricktop” Smith recalled the day when she arrived in Paris in May 1924 from New York. Arrival to Paris and London made different impact on musicians, depending on a variety of factors, including, as in the case of Bricktop, the social position that the person had in their place of origin.

This chapter portrays the main routes that musicians, who operated in the music scenes in Paris and London and who were linked to black genres of music, took in the interwar years. Two main issues are at the core of the chapter: mobility and backgrounds.

Mobility is an essential feature of musicians’ lives. In the late nineteenth century, the process of the industrialisation of music and the development of transports and communication played a crucial role in giving musicians’ mobility a larger dimension, from mainly movements within regions to movements that had a national and, especially in the twentieth century, an international dimension. Mobility was a fundamental element that characterised the lives and careers of musicians performing black genres of music in both Paris and London. In the early twentieth century, the cities were protagonists of a process of internationalisation and were important nodes in the international entertainment circuit. They attracted musicians who travelled to them in order to find employment in the music business, build or continue their careers, and spent brief or longer periods of time there. This mobility resulted in a high degree of fluidity within the music scenes of London and Paris: the arrival of musicians, their stays and activities in the cities, the encounters and exchanges that they experienced there, all contributed to the transformation of urban spaces.

However, these movements took place in a context of restriction on immigration implemented by the governments of both countries. In Great Britain, the Aliens Restriction Act of 1914 - amended and extended in 1919 - established a great number of restrictions on the presence of foreigners in the country in times of war or state of emergency. One year later, it was the Aliens Order, enacted in 1920, that regulated foreign presence in times of peace on the British soil. The law required all those who wanted to settle in Britain or find an employment there to register with the police. Failure to do so would lead to deportation, and authorities had the power to deport anyone who was considered dangerous. In France, after the end of the First World War the government implemented new immigration controls covering the city of Paris to preserve the social order while wartime measures were abandoned. In the 1920s, the foreign population of Paris increased significantly, also due to the fact that the city was a refuge for groups of people in opposition to their countries’ governments. The Paris police, as a

consequence, was reinforced and it used immigration law to control groups of foreigners through various types of measures that include expulsion.[2]

Due to these restrictions, the diversification of people arriving in the cities, therefore, could be a crucial factor in their careers. Musicians who came from within national and imperial borders in many cases arrived in the two capitals because other foreign musicians had difficulties reaching France or Great Britain, and the demand for musicians able to play specific genres of music was high.

Furthermore, musicians who arrived in the cities entered into contact with each other bringing with them their personal experiences and the social, cultural and musical history of their country of origin. Their backgrounds, as well as the link with the music that preceded them appear to be key factors in shaping their musical careers. Indeed, their geographical provenance, their social position and their cultural formation all contributed to the background that musicians had and brought with them.

Mobility and backgrounds are extremely relevant elements in order to understand how black genres of music were not performed by a monolithic block of people ("blacks"). On the contrary they were performed by musicians with different histories, who moved in the urban spaces and often performed various genres of music. Moreover, personal origins and experiences were important elements because the capacity to adapt to new genres was often linked to experiences of life that had led musicians to live in various cultural and musical contexts.

In this chapter I focus attention on the musicians who arrived in Paris and London, and played various forms of black music there.[3] I piece their personal experiences together, identifying several routes that they followed and that led them to arrive in the cities. The chapter makes an extensive use of personal sources, such as biographies and autobiographies; biographical dictionaries such as the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography*; books and dictionaries dedicated to specific genres of music, including *Who's Who of British Jazz* by John Chilton (2004 2nd edition) and the *Encyclopédie de la musique traditionnelle aux Antilles-Guyane: musiciennes et musiciens ayant évolué en France métropolitaine* by Aude-Anderson Bagoé (2005). These sources have been crucial in reconstructing the lives of musicians.

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[2] Clifford Rosenberg, *Policing Paris: The Origins of Modern Immigration Control Between the Wars* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2006), 6–10. On immigration policies see also Patrick Weil, *La France et ses étrangers: L'aventure d'une politique de l'immigration de 1938 à nos jours* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1991).

[3] Even if in the project my attention is devoted specifically to transatlantic movements, I bear the importance of the movements of musicians coming from other areas of the world – namely Africa and other parts of Europe – in mind. However, these actors are included in the investigation only when they directly entered into contact with the musicians analysed.

The three sections of the chapter are dedicated to three routes that musicians arriving in the two cities followed: the first concerns the movements from outside national and imperial borders, and draws attention to people arriving from the United States and Cuba; the second explores the movements of musicians arriving from the Caribbean territories of the two empires; and the third deals with movements from inside national borders therefore people arriving in the capitals from other parts of the country.

In so doing, I show how paths criss-crossed and give a sense of the movements that created the fluidity which characterised the music scenes in Paris and London. I also show how this fluidity, based on extreme high mobility - even in a time of restriction on immigration and in some cases thanks to this restriction, - resulted in connections that went beyond national boundaries, and found in globalised and globalising cities the settings for this music to spread.

Many musicians arrived in Paris and London from outside national and imperial borders. The United States was the major site of departure, and New York in particular played a central role in this sense.

The Great War was an important moment for the spread in Europe of the various genres of music arriving from the United States into Europe. During the war, the mobilisation of non-white soldiers and workers in Europe, created transnational movements and interracial encounters. On French territory, for instance, over one million non-white men were mobilised by France, Britain and the United States. Attitudes towards foreign soldiers and workers varied: there were many instances of individual kindness, as well as a combination of racism, exoticism and fear. While France had already deployed colonial troops in Europe, the British had used colonial troops for imperial defence, but not on the continent: the deployment of two Indian divisions on French soil was the first case of British colonial troops fighting in Europe.[4]

The experience of the war in some cases was important for modifying stereotypes towards coloured people. In the French context, the deployment of African American soldiers played a part in challenging the stereotyped image of blacks as savages, through an association with the modernity linked to the United States. Many of these soldiers spoke about receiving warm treatment from French people. Their experiences were crucial to spread the myth of France as the "land of freedom;" a country free from racism. This became a fundamental argument employed by African American activists and the press to support the fight against racism in the United States. Furthermore, this myth came to be an additional motive behind the choice of leaving the United States that many African Americans made to escape discrimination.[5]

[4] The Indians were the only British colonial non-white troops allowed to fight in Europe, as a consequence of ideas about racial categorisation. In both France and Britain the attitudes towards colonial troops were different, indeed in many cases these attitudes involved distinctions regarding ethnic groups, usually differentiated between "warlike" and "non-warlike" races. For an interesting reconstruction of the racial and colonial aspects of the First World War, see the volume edited by Santanu Das, ed., *Race, Empire and First World War Writing* (Cambridge ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011). Among the studies which have driven attention to specific groups of soldiers are Joe Lunn, '"Les Races Guerrieres": Racial Preconceptions in the French Military about West African Soldiers during the First World War', *Journal of Contemporary History* 34, no. 4 (October 1999): 517–36; Glenford D. Howe, *Race, War and Nationalism: A Social History of West Indians in the First World War* (Kingston: Ian Randle, 2002); Richard Smith, *Jamaican Volunteers in the First World War: Race, Masculinity and the Development of National Consciousness* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2004); Richard Fogarty and Andrew Jarboe, eds., *Empires in World War I: Shifting Frontiers and Imperial Dynamics in a Global Conflict* (London and New York: Tauris, 2014).

[5] The years which immediately followed the end of the First World War saw a growth of racial discrimination in the United States. In the South, in 1918 and 1919, there was an increase in the number of lynchings, whilst in the

In this context, black forms of art found recognition, and music in particular became one of the symbols of the 1920s. However, this recognition was ambiguous because it corresponded to a different range of ideas about modernity and civilisation. African American forms were more favourably accepted whilst black forms of art from other parts of the world – in particular from Africa – tended either to be considered negatively or not to be taken in a serious way.[6]

The importance of the war for the spread of American music, and of jazz in particular, is also linked to musical activities within the army. Military bands formed by black soldiers played a fundamental role in this sense. This was the case of the 369th Infantry Regiment, also known as the "Harlem Hellfighters", formed in New York and composed by African Americans and Puerto Ricans of African descent. The regiment's marching band, directed by the ragtime and jazz bandleader James Reese Europe, helped spread early jazz throughout Europe during the war. The band toured France performing for British, French and American soldiers, but also for French civilians, and recorded for the French record company Pathé.[7] In addition, given the vogue of so-called Negro Art in Europe in the first decades of the twentieth century, African American bands and musicians found in the elegant clubs' clientele was fertile soil for the growth in popularity of African American music. Among these, was the drummer Louis Mitchell, who arrived in Britain in 1914 with his band and played an important role in the London and Paris music scenes, and the Southern Syncopated Orchestra – the orchestra formed in New York in 1918, which performed in London in 1919.[8]

In the aftermath of the war small bands formed by coloured musicians who were members of big orchestras such as the Southern Syncopated Orchestra began to appear in exclusive clubs in London, enlarging the audience of the various types of African American music presented. The spread of these kinds of bands decreased after 1922 when various fashionable clubs in London gave more space to big shows. Therefore, many of these musicians decided to move to other cities, especially to Paris. [9]

North a wave of race riots spread, in particular starting in the summer of 1919, the so-called "Red Summer." See for example Jan Voogd, *Race Riots and Resistance: The Red Summer of 1919* (New York: Peter Lang, 2008), and William M. Tuttle, *Race Riot: Chicago in the Red Summer of 1919* (Champaign: University of Illinois Press, 1996).

[6] The spread of black forms of art throughout Europe in the first part of the twentieth century has been explored by many scholars in recent years, in the context of the growing interest about cultures and race issues. The vogue for so-called Negro Art in the 1920s (the "Jazz Age") has attracted much attention, especially in the French context. See for example Straw, *Interplay Negrophilia*; Berliner, *Ambivalent Desire*.

[7] R. Reid Badger, 'James Reese Europe and the Prehistory of Jazz', *American Music* 7, no. 1 (1989): 48.

[8] Howard Rye, 'The Southern Syncopated Orchestra', *Black Music Research Journal* 29, no. 2 (Fall 2009): 153–228.

[9] Howard Rye, 'Fearsome Means of Discord: Early Encounters with Jazz', in *Black Music in Britain: Essays on the Afro-Asian Contribution to Popular Music* (Milton Keynes: Open University Press, 1990), 49–53.

As already mentioned, New York played a central role as a site of departure for musicians travelling towards Europe, and its importance was closely linked to its lively cultural life. Not only was the city the cultural capital of the country, the major centre for art, theatre, music and publishing, but it was also a site of multicultural encounters, as it attracted migrants with different origins. In particular, in the first decades of the twentieth century the majority of migrants arrived from the United States, especially African Americans of the South and of the Atlantic Coast migrating towards the North, and from the Caribbean, with a prominence of migrants from the British territories, followed by migrants from Hispanophone islands and Latin America. Harlem at the beginning of the 1920s had become a city within a city with its black population and its lively entertaining nightlife of clubs, cabarets and "rent parties" (parties in private flats) which in the era of Prohibition were attractive for those who wanted to escape restrictions.

It was in this period of social and cultural changes that the literary and artistic movement of the Harlem Renaissance emerged. Also called the "New Negro Movement," this group formed by writers, artists and intellectuals attributed new value to Africa and its culture in order to affirm the role of blacks in a society that discriminated against them.[10] In 1925 Alain Locke edited the anthology *The New Negro*, which was a celebration of the movement, and insisted upon the strength and the motivation that should lead the auto-determination of black people. Art was a fundamental tool for expression and for demonstrating the value of black people in order to contribute to a fuller development of American society.[11] Music had a peculiar value in the Harlem Renaissance, as a source of inspiration for other forms of art. Indeed, for the writers and artists of the movement music was a fundamental tool. They used the distinctive features of black genres of music, especially blues and jazz, such as syncopation and call-and-response, as devices to be adopted in their forms of art. This affirmation of peculiar black cultural contribution through music constituted a fundamental element for the claim to appraise the importance of the role played by African Americans in American culture. As one of the

[10] On the Harlem Renaissance see Nathan Irvin Huggins, *Harlem Renaissance* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1971), David Levering Lewis, *When Harlem Was in Vogue* (New York: Random House, 1979), George Hutchinson, *The Harlem Renaissance in Black and White* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995), Cheryl A. Wall, *Women of the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1995), Geneviève Fabre and Michel Feith, eds., *Temples for Tomorrow: Looking Back at the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001).

[11] Locke wrote that "the racialism of the Negro is no limitation or reservation with respect to American life […], the choice is not between one way for the Negro and another way for the rest, but between American institutions frustrated on the one hand and American ideals progressively fulfilled and realized on the other." Alain Locke, *The New Negro* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1997), 12.

historians of the movement Michel Feith has written, "music and rhythm became the main vectors/supports of African cultural survival in the United States."[12]

Some of the protagonists of the movement sojourned in Paris and London, in many cases at the beginning of their career. For instance, the poet Langston Hughes, who arrived in Paris in 1924, worked as a dishwasher in one of the most fashionable Parisian cabarets, Le Grand Duc, when Eugene Bullard was the manager and the singer Bricktop was employed there.[13] More generally, these social and cultural developments formed the background of many musicians who arrived in Europe.

Not only was the United States a major production site of African American music and departure point for American musicians who went to Europe, but it was also an important site for the diffusion of Caribbean styles of music and for the careers of Caribbean musicians. The fact that Caribbean genres of music and musicians played a fundamental role in the musical evolution of these years has been marginalised by historiography that has tended to concentrate its attention on jazz, especially developments in various European countries, and on the specificity of African American influence, which was extremely strong but was part of a broader phenomenon that included multiple musical influences.[14]

The connection between the United States and Caribbean islands was an important element in the spread of black genres of music, whether they were genres of French and British territories or not. Indeed, this link was particularly strong with an island that was not part of the British and French empires, and whose distinct musical production played an important role in the evolution of music in these years, thus making a decisive contribution to the spread of cultural forms created by socially subordinated groups: Cuba.

Cuban music had begun to spread outside the island since the first years of the twentieth century. Established with the military occupation of 1898 during the last months of the Cuban War of Independence - also known as the Spanish-American War -, the contacts between Cuba

[12] Michel Feith, "The Syncopated African: Constructions of Origins in the Harlem Renaissance (Literature, Music, Visual Arts)," in *Temples for Tomorrow: Looking Back at the Harlem Renaissance* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2001), 62. On the music in the Harlem Renaissance see Samuel A. Floyd, ed., *Black Music in the Harlem Renaissance* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1993); Jon Michael Spencer, *New Negroes and Their Music* (Knoxville: University of Tennessee Press, 1997); Paul Allen Anderson, *Deep River: Music and Memory in Harlem Renaissance Thought* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2001).

[13] Langston Hughes, *The Collected Works of Langston Hughes. Autobiography: The Big Sea*, vol. 13 (Columbia and London: University of Missouri Press, 2002), 123–54. Among others were the poet Claude McKay who was in London in 1919 and in Paris in 1924, and the artist Gwendolyn Bennett, who studied art at the Sorbonne in the mid 1920s.

[14] One study that has examined the styles of music from the American continent as a group is Timothy Brennan, *Secular Devotion: Afro-Latin Music and Imperial Jazz* (London and New York: Verso, 2008).

and the United States played a crucial role in this sense. Havana became a fashionable destination for many tourists who appreciated the music that they heard during their stay.[15] The presence of American soldiers on Cuban soil led to the diffusion of American styles of music, especially jazz and blues. American musicians, both as members of orchestras and as single players, performed on the island also with Cuban musicians, and this influence appeared in their compositions. Further, the American presence reinforced racial discrimination in Cuba, differentiating the spaces between high class places frequented by Americans, the Cuban middle and high-class *criolla*, and white musicians, and cabarets of lower level – for this reason called *de segunda* and *de tercera* – where Cuban bands, usually formed by coloured musicians, performed.[16] An example of these contacts is the Sexteto Habanero, which formed in 1920 in Havana and played the typical Cuban genre of *son*. The band recorded in 1918 for the American company Victor for the first time, and became very popular in the United States and in Cuba. Thereafter their success spread internationally.[17]

Furthermore, in the 1920s American recording companies had interest in publishing Cuban music as it gained considerable success throughout clubs and theatres especially in Havana and New York. Until 1936 Cuba did not develop the technology to make audio recordings, therefore since the end of the nineteenth century foreign companies had been active in sending agents to find Cuban musicians and put them under contract. American companies such as Victor, Columbia, and Brunswick put forward this activity of recruitment. The latter was the first label to record Afro-Cuban styles. In addition, the development of radio broadcasting on the island was a fundamental element for the dissemination of recorded Cuban music, and the independent Cuban radio stations established during the 1920s played a pivotal role in this sense.

[15] The works of Louis Pérez on the relation between Cuba and the United States are remarkable: Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba and the United States: Ties of Singular Intimacy*, 3rd ed. (Athens and London: University of Georgia Press, 2003); Louis A. Pérez, *The War of 1898: The United States and Cuba in History and Historiography* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1998); Louis A. Pérez, *On Becoming Cuban: Identity, Nationality, and Culture* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 1999).

[16] See Chapter 6 of Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997); and Leonardo Acosta, "Interinfluencias y confluencias entre las música de Cuba y los Estados Unidos," in *Mirar El Niágara. Huellas culturales entre Cuba y los Estados Unidos* (La Habana: Centro de Investigación y Desarrollo de la Cultura Cubana Juan Marinello, 2000), 295–328. On the significance of race and racism in Cuba see Alejandro De la Fuente, *A Nation for All: Race, Inequality, and Politics in Twentieth-Century Cuba* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[17] Ned Sublette, *Cuba and Its Music: From the First Drums to the Mambo* (Chicago: Chicago Review Press, 2004), 335–336, 363; Tim Brooks, *Lost Sounds: Blacks and the Birth of the Recording Industry, 1890-1919* (Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2004), 527.

In the interwar years, many Cuban musicians started recording in the United States, often in the same studios where African American musicians recorded at the time, and several of them also moved to the United States where they built their careers.[18]

Amongst these was the flutist Albero Socarrás. Born in Manzanillo in Eastern Cuba in 1908, Socarrás learned to play the flute as a child. He was first taught by his mother, then studied at the Conservatory in Santiago de Cuba. Socarrás played in various bands in Havana until 1927 when he moved to New York, driven by the willingness to build his musical career, but also to escape from racial discrimination that he felt on the island where American-owned clubs and Cuban hotels often did not employ black musicians, preferring whites or light-skinned players. As he recalled, this situation led him to think that it was better to leave Cuba and be a foreigner in another country, instead of facing discrimination in his own country:

> This is my country, I was born here, and I don't want to be discriminated here. If I'm discriminated in the United States, that means I'm no American. I'm no American, but in my own country to be discriminated because I was black, I don't want to get into that.[19]

Like other Afro-Cubans who moved to New York Socarrás lived in Harlem, not in El Barrio, the area of the city where the Latino community – especially Puerto Ricans – was concentrated. Therefore, he entered into contact with African American musicians and became active on the New York musical scene. Indeed, he worked as a live musician at the Harlem Opera House and in many dance bands, as a studio session musician for the company Columbia Records, and as an arranger. In 1929 on the tune *Have You Ever Felt that Way* by Clarence Williams, Socarrás recorded what is considered the first flute solo in the history of jazz. His intention was to form a band with good musicians who played Cuban music, regardless of their origins, and he was among the Cuban musicians who introduced Afro-Cuban elements in jazz. During the 1930s Socarrás went to Europe on several occasions, as a member of variety shows such as *Blackbirds*,

[18] Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 101–4.
[19] Cited in Christina D. Abreu, *Rhythms of Race: Cuban Musicians and the Making of Latino New York City and Miami, 1940-1960* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2015), 67.

and he accompanied the Cuban all-female band Anacaona on their tour in Paris in 1938 at Les Ambassadeurs.[20]

As we have seen in the case of Socarrás, the economic and musical opportunities that the United States – New York in particular – offered were a factor that influenced musicians in their choice to leave Cuba. Furthermore, in the late 1920s the internal political situation on the island contributed to the presence of Cubans abroad. In 1924 the former general of the War of Independence Gerardo Machado was elected President. Despite the promised economic and social reforms, Machado used his power like a typical *caudillo* figure.[21] He repressed the opposition to his regime, and in 1928 changed the constitution in order to extend the duration of the presidential mandate. In addition, his government did not change the policy of substantial subordination of Cuba to the interests of the United States.[22] The repression of Machado's regime forced many activists, writers, artists and intellectuals to leave the country, and New York and Paris were the two privileged destinations for them. Among these was the writer and musicologist Alejo Carpentier, who was arrested in 1927 together with other writers who had signed the *Manifesto Minorista*, a manifesto against Machado's regime, and was released on bail. In 1928 he managed to secretly leave Cuba and arrived in Paris where he stayed until 1939, being active on the avant-garde surrealist Parisian scene.[23]

In the 1930s the influence of Cuban music could be felt in Paris and London, both through the performances of Cuban musicians in the cities and through the introduction of typical Afro-Cuban elements in other genres. In a similar way to what has been noted about the United States, Afro-Cuban music and rhythm became the elements which distinguished Cuban culture and its spread abroad.[24]

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[20] Helio Orovio, *Cuban Music from A to Z* (Durham: Duke University Press, 2004), 202–203; Abreu, *Rhythms of Race*, 47–48; 67–68.

[21] See Alessandra Lorini, 'Revering and Contesting Machado in the Shadow of the Platt Amendment: Cuban Nationalism and Anti-Imperialism in the 1920s', in *Cuba in the World, the World in Cuba: Essays on Cuban History, Politics and Culture* (Firenze: Firenze University Press, 2009), 109–24.

[22] On the history of the Machado regime see for example Louis A. Pérez, *Cuba: Between Reform and Revolution*, 5th ed. (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2014) and Robert W. Whitney, *State and Revolution in Cuba: Mass Mobilization and Political Change, 1920-1940* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2001).

[23] Gregory T. Cushman, "¿De qué color es el oro? Race, Environment, and the History of Cuban National Music, 1898-1958," *Latin American Music Review* 26, no. 2 (Fall/Winter 2005): 177.

[24] On this see Antonio Benítez-Rojo and James Maraniss, 'The Role of Music in the Emergence of Afro-Cuban Culture', *Research in African Literatures* 29, no. 1 (1998): 179–84.

A significant number of musicians, who were active outside the island, found in Paris and London two of the major European sites where their music could be performed. Both bands and single musicians played an important role in this process.[25]

Don Marino Barreto and his brother Emilio were among these musicians. Born in 1907 in Havana, Marino Barreto learned to play the piano as a child, and began his career as an actor in Spain where in 1925 his family moved in order to escape Machado's regime. One year later he left Spain and arrived in Paris with his younger brother Emilio who played the guitar and the violin. They started being active in the Parisian music scene and were members of the American revue *Black People*.

Marino went to London in 1928, where he played in dance bands usually featuring American musicians. Together with the African American singer Norris Smith he formed a duo, and in 1929 they went to Paris. Thus, Marino was again active in the Parisian music scene where he also recorded his duets with Smith.[26] In 1935 he returned to London and performed there with his duo. During the 1940s Don Marino Barreto became an important figure for the spread of Afro-Cuban music in London, which he mixed with jazz tunes during his shows.[27]

While Marino played in both London and Paris in the first part of his career, Emilio, who took the stage name of Don Barreto, built his career in Paris. The Cuban orchestra that he formed was the most well-known in Paris that played Cuban genres of music. In 1933 the journal *Jazz-Tango* dedicated an article to his orchestra that debuted in the Montmartre club Melody's, which opened in 1931 during the Colonial Exposition. In February 1932 the orchestra made its debut, and in the following years spread the Cuban genre of the rumba in Paris. The article underlined how the success of the orchestra was linked to the fact that the public preferred the small band (usually formed by five elements, but Barreto also made one-man shows), because it performed a more genuine genre compared to the rumbas with jazz arrangements performed by other big orchestras in Paris. Don Barreto's orchestra made records for Columbia that were successful. This led the band to sign an exclusive contract with the

[25] The band Lecuona Cuban Boys, whose performances included a mixture of jazz, European and Cuban styles, band formed in the 1920s and promoted Cuban music in Europe, especially in Paris that was an important site for the band's activity on the continent. See Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness*, 142.

[26] William A. Shack, *Harlem in Montmartre: A Paris Jazz Story Between the Great Wars* (Berkley: University of California Press, 2001), 72; Rainer E. Lotz, 'Black Diamonds Are Forever: A Glimpse of the Prehistory of Jazz in Europe', *The Black Perspective in Music* 12, no. 2 (Autumn 1984): 233.Rainer E. Lotz, "Black Diamonds Are Forever: A Glimpse of the Prehistory of Jazz in Europe," *The Black Perspective in Music* 12, no. 2 (Autumn 1984): 217–34

[27] Val Wilmer, 'Barreto, Don Marino (1907–1995)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/75195, accessed 21 September 2015.

British company Decca and they made records in London.[28]

Another Cuban musician who played an important role for the spread of Cuban music was the pianist and composer Oscar Calle. Like Don Marino Barreto, Calle too received attention in musical journals. *Jazz-Tango* published an article about him in October 1936. Calle arrived in France in 1928 from La Havana where he had been director of an orchestra and a bandleader. His debut in Paris was a great success and, significantly, it was the first time that Cuban music was performed in the city. Due to his success, Calle travelled throughout Europe performing with his band before settling in Paris in 1931 becoming the resident band at Mélody's, a club that the article labelled as the "temple of Cuban music." Calle was presented as a great pianist who played both jazz and Cuban music, as a composer of successful rumbas and as the one who launched another Cuban dance, the conga, which was successful in all dancing places in Paris.[29]

The social (and racial) contexts of the United States and Cuba are significant in order to clarify the importance that different personal backgrounds had for arrivals to Paris and London. These backgrounds influenced the perceptions of the two urban contexts and the ways to adapt to the social structures and conditions that arrivals found in the two cities.

For instance, one important element in this sense is related to the meaning of blackness. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the idea of the "New Negro" was at the centre of an intense debate among African American intellectuals. This concept had emerged in the late nineteenth century in order to identify a new African American man,[30] and had been used by African American intellectuals with different meanings, such as Booker T. Washington, the creator of the Tuskegee Institute for African American students in Alabama in 1881,[31] and W. E. B. Du Bois, the co-founder of the civil rights organisation National Association for the

[28] "L'orchestre Don Barreto," *Jazz-Tango* IV, no. 28 (Janvier 1933): 14.
[29] "Oscar Calle," *L'Orchestre - Jazz-Tango* VII, no. 70 (Octobre 1936): 12.
[30] This concept appeared for the first time in Reverend W. E. C. Wright's speech in 1894, in which he identified a new African American different from the former slave, an active worker and also entrepreneur with Christian education. See Henry Louis Gates and Gene Andrew Jarrett, *The New Negro: Readings on Race, Representation, and African American Culture, 1982–1938* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007), 23–26.
[31] For Booker T. Washington civil rights had to be achieved by constructing a new role for African Americans within society, and it was crucial to affirm their value through work, more than through art and political power. As he wrote in 1903 the economic independence would pave the way for the end of discriminations and violence: "I would set no limits to the attainments of the Negro in arts, in letters or statesmanship, but I believe the surest way to reach those ends is by laying the foundation in the little things of life that lie immediately about one's door. I plead for industrial education and development for the Negro not because I want to cramp him, but because I want to free him," Booker T. Washington, *Industrial Education for the Negro*, 1903, http://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/industrial-education-for-the-negro/. On Washington see Louis R. Harlan, *Booker T. Washington: The Making of a Black Leader, 1856-1901* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1972); Robert J. Norrell, *Up from History: The Life of Booker T. Washington* (Cambridge and London: Harvard University Press, 2009)

Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).[32] In the years that followed World War I the New Negro was celebrated by many activists and intellectuals as a citizen who rejected white stereotypes and rebelled against racism and discrimination by insisting upon his rights, exalting his African origins and his capacities. In the Harlem Renaissance, the rebellion became artistic affirmation of the black part of American society. The artists gave value to black cultural elements, in this way making them fundamental contributions to American culture as a whole.

Ideas of racial reconciliation and affirmation of civil rights within American society developed in parallel with ideas of racial autonomy, such as the ones promoted by the Jamaican journalist and political leader Marcus Garvey, who in 1914 founded the organisation Universal Negro Improvement Association (UNIA). Garvey conveyed the idea of an independent nation to be constructed in Africa, a "Negro Empire" that would unite all black peoples of the world linked by their common African origins.[33] His message attracted many blacks throughout the world and was influential in the Caribbean, in particular among the English-speaking islanders, such was the case for the Jamaican trumpeter Leslie Thompson.

Born in 1901 in Kingston, Thompson moved to London in 1929, and started working in theatrical shows. In the following years, he made recordings, worked in clubs and theatres, and in 1934 he also joined Louis Armstrong during his European tour.[34] Thompson recalled that reading UNIA's newspaper *Negro World* pushed him to change his political orientation, but what really changed his view was attending Garvey's speeches at Speakers' Corner in Hyde Park in the 1930s, where he remembered that he also listened to coloured boys and Indian students on soap boxes attacking Britain's colonial system:

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[32] W. E. B. Du Bois elaborated a very different idea about the role of African Americans compared to Washington's belief. For Du Bois, they had always lived a condition of double consciousness, being both American and Negro, and it was time for the New Negro to "merge his double self into a better and truer self," he wrote in 1903: Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk*, 8. Thus, in a country founded on the ideal of equality, the positive value given to the African past and to the specific qualities of the Negro should result in an active participation of African Americans to the development of society. In this sense for Du Bois, intellectual education and art played a crucial role, especially for the formation of a leadership which would led the fight for civil rights. On Du Bois see David Levering Lewis, *W. E. B. Du Bois, 1868-1919: Biography of a Race* (New York: Owl Books, 1993).

[33] Garvey wrote that "not far distant, Africa shall reflect a splendid demonstration of the worth of the Negro, of the determination of the Negro, to set himself free and to establish a government of his own," Marcus Garvey, *The Philosophy and Opinions of Marcus Garvey, Or, Africa for the Africans*, ed. Amy Jacques Garvey (Dover: The Majority Press, 1986), 78. In 1920 the UNIA organised the first convention of this new nation, during which a temporary government was elected and a Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World was redacted. For the full text of the Declaration see http://historymatters.gmu.edu/d/5122/. On Garvey see Judith Stein, *The World of Marcus Garvey: Race and Class in Modern Society* (Baton Rouge and London: Louisiana State University Press, 1986); Colin Grant, *Negro with a Hat: The Rise and Fall of Marcus Garvey* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2008).

[34] John Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz: 2nd Edition* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 361.

> I had no colour consciousness at all; even the influence of Garvey's newspaper only dented my attitudes. I was a product of my background. Jamaica was dominated by a culture from England and America, and like many I accepted it without thinking. Marcus Garvey was responsible for my awakening, and for so many people like me.[35]

Garvey's ideas also reached Cuba. In the 1920s branches of the organisation based in Harlem emerged on the island, and reached the highest number of UNIA's branches active outside the United States. Despite the movement in Cuba largely being formed of English-speaking immigrants from the Caribbean and the United States, Afro-Cuban activists could find in the activities of the organisation, which included speeches and music, spaces for broadening their perspective, and developing ideas about Cuban society. Thus, during the 1920s Garvey's movement played an important role in establishing cultural links between Afro-Cubans and English-speaking blacks.[36]

This is particularly significant because in Cuba, the meaning accorded to blackness was unusual. The fact that in the War of Independence, Cubans of African origins had fought alongside white Cubans, had been at the basis of the idea that the essence of Cuban identity was the so-called *cubanidad*, formed by white, black, and mulatto elements merged in the context of Cuba. This idea of equality served to legitimise the Cuban system, which tended to obscure the existence of racial discrimination on the island, but at the same time it became a myth that still had to be realised.[37] In the 1920s the artists who formed the movement of Afrocubanismo, attributed new value to black cultural contributions to Cuban national culture, in order to

[35] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 99.
[36] Frank A. Guridy, "Un Dios, Un Fin, Un Destino: Enacting Diaspora in the Garvey Movement," in *Forging Diaspora: Afro-Cubans and African Americans in a World of Empire and Jim Crow* (Chapel Hill and London: University of North Carolina Press, 2010), 61–106
[37] The concept of *cubanidad* was formulated by the hero of the War of Independence José Martí in the late nineteenth century. In one of his writings, *Mi raza* (1893), Martí wrote that in Cuba there was no fear of race war because man is more than white, mixed, or coloured ("en Cuba no hay temor a la guerra de razas. Hombre es más que blanco, más que mulato, más que negro.") He elaborated a notion of fatherland based upon inclusion: the true Cuban republic should be include everybody ("con todos, y para el bien de todos"). José Martí, 'Mi Raza', vol. 2 (Habana: Obras Completas Editorial de Ciencias Sociales, 1975), 298–300. On Martí see Alfred J. López, *José Martí: A Revolutionary Life* (Austin: University of Texas Press, 2014). On the use of the interpretations of Martí's thought and figure see the volume Mauricio A. Font and Alfonso W. Quiroz, eds., *The Cuban Republic and José Martí: Reception and Use of a National Symbol* (New York: Lexington Books, 2006).

reconcile a reality of racial pluralism with the necessity of creating a culturally homogeneous nation: blackness was a component of Cuban national identity, a *cubanidad mestiza*.[38]

Don Barreto wrote a series of technical articles in the journal *Jazz-Tango* in order to explain the Cuban genre of the rumba. The first article was published in July 1936 and it testifies how he had internalised the idea of the *cubanidad*. In order to explain that the rumba and the son were not exclusively black dances, at the beginning of the article Barreto explored the history of Cuba. In Cuba, he maintained, racial antagonism did not exist, and all the Cubans, whatever their skin colour, were the same:

> A Cuba, il n'existe pas d'antagonisme ni de séparation comme aux Etats-Unis. Quatre long siècles de croisement de race continu ont mélangé de telle façon le sang et ont créé une telle variété de types et de couleur que souvent on ne sait où finit le noir et où commence le blanc. […] La mentalité de la population blanche et celle de la noire, sont identiques. Leurs réactions morales, devant les mêmes phénomènes, sont égales. Leurs goûts, leur conception de la vie, leur idiosyncrasie ne diffèrent en rien. C'est que les uns et les autres sont des produits du même milieu et de la même éducation.

With the freeing of the slaves in Cuba, the War of Independence had been fought by both whites and blacks, and the founding of the Republic brought whites and blacks to live together, experiencing the same opportunities in all fields of life and living in the same cultural environment. This was true also with regard to music: in Cuba there was not a white music and a black music, but there was a national music with African roots:

> Il n'y a pas à Cuba, comme il n'y a pas aux Etats-Unis, une musique blanche et une musique noire. Il n'y a qu'une musique nationale de racine africaine. Si Cuba prétendait nettoyer de toute influence africaine son folklore musical, pour en extraire la pure essence européenne, il ne lui resterait rien.[39]

[38] On the Afrocubanismo movement see Robin Moore, *Nationalizing Blackness: Afrocubanismo and Artistic Revolution in Havana, 1920-1940* (Pittsburgh: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1997), and the volume, which adopts a literary perspective, Thomas F. Anderson, *Carnival and National Identity in the Poetry of Afrocubanismo* (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 2011).

[39] M. Barreto, "Autour de la Rumba", *Jazz-Tango-Dancing* III, n. 22 (Juillet 1932): 7

The contribution of Cuban music to the spread of black genres of music is to be considered as part of the larger phenomenon of the diffusion of Latin music styles, in which the genres from the Caribbean were fundamental parts. This influence has tended to be marginal in explorations of black genres of music even if the spread of genres such as rumba, calypso, and the beguine was an important feature of the evolution of music scenes of capitals of empires, like Paris and London. Musicians who arrived in the two cities from British and French colonial territories of that area of the world made a major contribution in this sense.

Musicians who arrived in London and Paris from the territories of the British and French empires in the Caribbean, came especially from the British colonies of Jamaica and Trinidad and, in a minor number, British Guiana, and from the French islands of Martinique and Guadeloupe. In these cases, the routes that led these musicians to the two cities were in part shaped by the fact that their territories of origin belonged to the Empires. Nevertheless, wider connections with territories that were not part of the Empires but were linked to the Caribbean area, played a role in determining the movements.

The musical education or training of several musicians who arrived in Europe was linked to their employment in military or police bands. These bands were important for the diffusion of black genres of music, for the training of musicians, and also for the contacts between them. For instance, the Trinidadian musician Gerald "Al" Jennings recalled the band formed during the war while he was in the navy that played for wounded "coloured" soldiers before their repatriation.[40] As members of bands such as the West India Regiment band or the British Guiana Militia Band, Caribbean musicians enjoyed their first musical experiences far from the shores of the Caribbean Sea. This is what the West India Regiment band's players experienced when they participated in the Canadian National Exhibition in 1922 and the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley in 1924. In some other cases the recruitment in the army was subsequent to the arrival in Europe, but it was important for the introduction of music all the same. For example, the Guadeloupian Félix Valvert, had already arrived in France when he was called up to military service in 1927. Valvert wished to be enrolled into one of the regiments of the French Army that had a musical division, and, even if he could not play an instrument properly and only had some knowledge of music theory, he was included in one of these regiments, thus receiving musical training together with other soldiers.[41]

For musicians arriving in Europe from the territories of the two Empires, international expositions played an important role. The exhibitions provided spaces in which musicians arriving in Paris and London could enter into contact with the music scenes of the cities hosting

[40] The experience of the band is told by Jennings in an article published in December 1946 by the journal *Melody Maker*, cit. in John Cowley, 'London Is the Place: Caribbean Music in the Context of Empire 1900-1960', in *Black Music in Britain: Essays on the Afro-Asian Contribution to Popular Music* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 1990), 60.
[41] Félix Valvert, *Félix Valvert, le roi de la rumba: mémoires*, ed. Isabelle Valvert (Paris: New Legend, 2001), 34–35.

the expositions, and with people involved in those scenes. Indeed, in the context of the exhibitions, which were built on the grounds of imperial thought and practices, musicians from the colonies had the possibility to perform their music and to show their abilities. Two expositions had a particular value in this sense with regard to the genres of music that are at the centre of my analysis: the British Colonial Exhibition of 1924-1925; and the Paris Colonial Exposition of 1931.[42] For several musicians who played a role in the music scenes of Paris and London these events were of crucial importance for their choices and their careers.

During the British Colonial Exhibition the West India Regiment performed at Wembley, and it included musicians who would be active in the London music scene years later, such as the Jamaican trumpeters Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson and Leslie Thompson, and the saxophonist Louis Stephenson. The relevance of this experience for their first contact with the music scene of the city is well exemplified by two episodes that Leslie Thompson recalled in his autobiography. The West India Regiment band was invited to play at a party reserved for high society people, which was organised in the pavilion where Jamaican products were shown. Thus, the event was an opportunity for the members of the regiment to experience the practice of private parties frequented by elegant people, which was widespread in London. On the same occasion, the musicians came to know Egbert Thompson, the son of a sergeant of a regiment from Sierra Leone. Thompson had been the conductor of the Southern Syncopated Orchestra, and had arrived in Europe from New York. At the time of the exhibition, he was running a music agency in Paris, and had travelled to London with the intention of recruiting coloured musicians from the regiment's band. Leslie Thompson remembered that hearing about how the Paris music scene functioned – especially the availability of work and the level of payment – on that particular occasion stuck in his mind until when, a few years later, he decided to leave Jamaica to go to Europe.[43]

The Paris Colonial Exposition of 1931 was a fundamental moment for Caribbean music. A pavilion each represented the three French Caribbean colonies of Guiana, Guadeloupe, and Martinique. There were also parades of floats that represented the various countries, for example Félix Valvert with his orchestra represented the Caribbean territories.[44]

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[42] On these expositions see for example Alexander C. T. Geppert, *Fleeting Cities: Imperial Expositions in Fin-de-Siècle Europe* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010). On the French exposition see also Catherine Hodeir and Michel Pierre, *1931. L'exposition coloniale* (Bruxelles: Editions Complexe, 1991); Patricia A. Morton, *Hybrid Modernities: Architecture and Representation at the 1931 Colonial Exposition, Paris* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2000).

[43] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 45–46.

[44] Edwin C. Hill, *Black Soundscapes White Stages: The Meaning of Francophone Sound in the Black Atlantic* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2013), 66–67; Valvert, *Félix Valvert*, 53–54.

The Guadeloupian pavilion hosted a music show, provided by the clarinettist Alexandre Stellio's orchestra. Born in Martinque in 1889, Alexandre Stellio moved with his family to French Guiana in 1898 where he took part in the musical scene of the capital. From there he moved to Paris in 1929 together with the pianist and director of orchestra Ernest Léardée. The performance of his orchestra at the Colonial Exposition received high praise from the audience, and the typical Guadeloupian and Martiniquan genre of the beguine was launched at an international level. For that occasion Stellio employed musicians who were already in Paris, such as the Martiniquan singer Léona Gabriel, but also recruited several musicians directly from the two islands, who came to Paris to play in the orchestra, thus entering into contact with the music scene of the city.[45]

This is one of the many examples which show the importance of the contacts that musicians maintained with their area of origin or that they were able to establish through informal connections when necessary. This was particularly useful when they wanted to recruit musicians who could perform specific styles of music, as was Stellio's case at the Paris Exposition. The exhibitions offered good job opportunities to musicians, as their performances were usually well paid.[46] In the case of the Colonial Exposition in Paris the performances of the typical Caribbean genres also paved the way for the spread of Caribbean music in Paris but also in other French cities. In the wake of the exhibition many entrepreneurs organised tours for the orchestras of the exposition, especially in the cities of Southwest France such as Bordeaux, Toulouse, and Marseille.

For some players, the employment in the context of the exposition was a turning point in their musical careers. This is what happened to the Martiniquan clarinettist Samuel Castendet, who had arrived in Paris in 1924 and started working in a factory. Through informal contacts Castendet was employed at the exhibition as a substitute for Stellio during the last weeks of the fair, because Stellio had left his role to work in Parisian cabarets. Castendet's performances at the exposition opened the way for his musical career first on a tour in the South West of France, and then in the Parisian musical scene.[47] Due to the success of Caribbean music many cabarets

[45] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 177–78; Aude-Anderson Bagoé, 'Fructueux Alexandre (Stellio)', in *Encyclopédie de La Musique Traditionnelle Aux Antilles-Guyane: Musiciennes et Musiciens Ayant Évolué En France Métropolitaine* (Case-Pilote: Éditions Lafontaine, 2005).
[46] Valvert recalled a sum of money of 100 francs for musicians, and 150 francs for him as leader of orchestra. Valvert, *Félix Valvert*, 53.
[47] Aude-Anderson Bagoé, 'Castendet Samuel (Sam)', in *Encyclopédie de la musique traditionnelle aux Antilles-Guyane: musiciennes et musiciens ayant évolué en France métropolitaine* (Case-Pilote: Éditions Lafontaine, 2005).

opened in the area of Montparnasse, and consequently the demand for Caribbean musicians increased as well.

It is worth underlining that the expositions were organised by the states to celebrate and increase popular support for colonial empires as well as promote trade. Significantly, the cases of the work of recruitment of Egbert Thompson at Wembley and Alexandre Stellio for the exposition in Paris, show how within those international events informal networks between musicians from the colonies found the space to articulate.

Whether musicians arrived in Europe on the occasion of exhibitions or because of other personal circumstances, in many instances their routes towards the capitals of the Empires included other places in between, among which there was usually at least another place in the Caribbean. These movements often involved various routes between the possessions of the Empires, generally with neighbouring states.[48] For example, the trajectory from Martinique towards French Guiana regarded several musicians who later went to Paris and built their careers there, sometimes together. In some cases the movements were linked to familiar reasons as it was for Alexandre Stellio and Léona Gabriel, whilst in others they were more strictly linked to musical opportunities, as was the case of the pianist, cellist and bandleader Ernest Léardée.

Another trajectory involving movements between colonial territories in the Caribbean was the one towards Trinidad that several musicians from other islands followed, as calypso music in Trinidad spread and gave musicians opportunities for working and for establishing connections. For instance, the clarinettist and saxophonist Freddy Grant, born in British Guiana and trained in a police band, arrived in Trinidad in 1933, after a tour in South America. From Trinidad he then went to London where he was active in the music scenes playing with various bands.[49]

The case of the trumpeter Dave Wilkins is even more illustrative of the mobility of these musicians in the Caribbean area, which preceded their mobility in the music scenes of London and Paris. Born in Barbados in 1914, the young David started playing the cornet in a Salvation Army band, and when he was seventeen he decided that he wanted music to be his profession. Thus, he left Barbados and spent a few years on other Caribbean islands, initially St. Vincent, where he studied and entered into contact with American jazz through recordings and learned to improvise, after that he went to Martinique, and eventually he went to Trinidad in 1934. It

[48] For a more general analysis of this migration in the large Caribbean see Lara Putnam, 'Borderlands and Border Crossers: Migrants and Boundaries in the Greater Caribbean, 1840-1940', *Small Axe: A Caribbean Journal of Criticism* 18, no. 1 (March 2014): 7–21.
[49] Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz*, 155.

was in Trinidad that he met the bandleader Ken Johnson, who made several shows there in 1935. Wilkins was the trumpeter of the band that accompanied Johnson during these shows and made such a good impression on the bandleader that he recruited him for his all-coloured band.[50] Wilkins' high mobility and musical experiences on the Caribbean islands were important elements of his background when he arrived in London and were crucial for his ability to perform different genres of music in the music scene.

In the last part of his career, when asked what the attraction of going to England was, Wilkins recalled that colonial education in the Caribbean was a factor that could influence the decision to go to England. However, his decision to move to England was mostly influenced by the opportunity to find better-paid jobs there:

> From school days you are taught of England as the mother country. It's a great thing to come to England. I'd met some sailors, when the Navy used to send Caribbean cruise, and the sailors used to come on shore and come to the dances and say I think you do well […]. Anyway, I took a chance because in those days I never really failed any offer that was made especially if the money was better.

Moreover, he added that he never felt lonely or homesick in London, and the perspective of going back to the Caribbean did not attract him at all:

> I had quite a good time and I never really wanted to go back to the West Indies because I've been trying to get out for years. There was nothing to Barbados, there was nothing for me there. [51]

In addition to the movement in between the Caribbean islands, many musicians from those islands moved to the United States, for the most part to New York. The Cardiff-born Frank

[50] Val Wilmer, 'Wilkins, David Livingstone (1914-1990)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74817, accessed 21 September 2015; Dave Wilkins, interview by Val Wilmer, 9 September 1987, C122/36, BL NSA.
[51] Wilkins, interview.

Deniz had the impression that a lot of people from the colonial territories in the Caribbean wanted to go to America and not to England, their mother-country, because of what he defines the "colonial type of attitude."[52]

Whether this impression corresponded to reality or not, the United States offered working opportunities on the music circuit. We have already seen the opportunities that Cuban musicians found in New York, but this link was by no means limited to Cuba. In fact, there were strong ties that connected the Caribbean area with the United States.

In New York Caribbean musicians could find jobs in the entertainment circuit in the numerous established clubs, and record for American companies. The American recording industry experienced a significant expansion in the first part of the twentieth century. In the 1920s the recording market was going in new directions, beginning to record specific genres of music for specific audiences. In particular, the so-called "race records" series included recordings by African American musicians, which were released for the African American audience. Furthermore, this attention to specific sectors of the population induced several recording companies to release records for immigrant groups, as was the case of the OKeh West Indian Series of the General Phonograph Corporation recorded for the Anglophone migrant communities from the Caribbean.[53] The Trinidadian Sam Manning was among the Caribbean musicians who recorded in New York for these series. His service in the West Indies Regiment in France and Middle East during the First World War made him start a musical career. He performed in vaudeville shows in Britain and on various Caribbean islands. In the early 1920s he moved to New York where he performed and recorded tunes for OKeh in 1924 and in the following years for other recording companies such as Paramount and Columbia. His records were a mix of Caribbean genres, blues and songs concerning the experience of immigrants in the Unites states.[54]

As we have already seen in various examples the power of attraction that big cities had was linked to the opportunities that musicians could find in those urban music scenes because of the development of the entertainment industry. Besides, these cities were also sites where musical

[52] Frank Deniz, interview by Val Wilmer, 18 August 1989, C122/81-82, BL NSA.

[53] John Cowley has noted that in the first quarter of the twentieth century Trinidadian musicians were the most prominent group which moved to the United States, and played and recorded there. See, John Cowley, *West Indian Gramophone Records in Britain, 1927-1950* (Coventry: Centre for Research in Ethnic Relations, University of Warwick, 1985). An account of these recordings has been made by Craig Martin Gibbs, *Calypso and Other Music of Trinidad, 1912-1962: An Annotated Discography* (Jefferson: McFarland, 2015).

[54] John Cowley, 'West Indies Blues: An Historical Overview 1920s-1950s—Blues and Music from the English-Speaking West Indies', in *Nobody Knows Where the Blues Come From: Lyrics and History* (Jackson: University Press of Mississippi, 2007), 202–6.

institutions were located, and in some cases musicians who were to be active in Paris and London moved there to study music. This is relevant in order to paint a more accurate picture of the variety of training and musical education that musicians who played the styles of music under investigation had.

For the clarinettist and composer Rudolph Dunbar it was the pursuit of classical musical training that led him first to the United States and then to Europe. Born in British Guiana in 1899, Dunbar started playing the clarinet in the British Guiana Militia Band in 1913. After a brief stay in Barbados as a member of the police band, he moved to New York in 1919 where he began his musical studies at the Institute of Musical Art of Columbia University. In the meantime he started playing jazz to pay for his studies. This double path of classical musical training and jazz playing in bands was replicated by Dunbar in Europe. He arrived in Paris in May 1925 in order to study at the conservatory for five years (conducting, composition and clarinet) and also philosophy and journalism at the University of Paris. During these years he played in various jazz bands performing not only in Paris but also in other European cities. He continued his studies in Leipzig and Vienna, before moving to London in 1931 where he founded a clarinet school, worked as a journalist, and was active on the musical jazz scene.[55]

The drummer and bandleader Edmund Ross, known as Edmundo Ros, also moved across the Caribbean and Europe following a path linked to musical training in institutions. He was born in Trinidad in 1910, and started his musical studies in the Police Academy. In 1927 he moved to Caracas in Venezuela, in order to study at the Academy of Music. In those years, jazz music spread from the United States increasing Ros interest in dance music. He started performing as percussionist and singer in the Caracas' clubs mostly playing Cuban tunes, and adopted his Latinised stage name. This period in Venezuela was fundamental for him; indeed, for the rest of his career many people believed that he was Venezuelan. In 1937 Edmundo Ros followed his musical studies, this time in London where he studied composition and conducting thanks to a fellowship that he won at the Royal Academy of Music. In London he entered into contact with African students, and through them he started frequenting clubs such as The Nest in Soho where he met Don Marino Barreto and others musicians playing the styles of music he used to play in Caracas. Thus, Ros began to be active on the London music scene joining Don Marino Barreto Cuban band, performing as vocalist and drummer and recording several records

[55] Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz*, 115; Howard Rye, 'Dunbar, Rudolph (1899-1988)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2004), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74922, accessed 21 September 2015.

for the Decca company. Thereafter, he formed his own band with musicians of various origins including the Nigerian pianist Fela Sowande, and became a prominent figure that promoted Caribbean music in the city.[56]

It is worth noting that in several cases, musicians from the Caribbean were active in the music scenes of both London and Paris, such as Don Marino Barreto and Rudolph Dunbar. Moreover, this was sometimes perceived as an indication of the difference between the two cities, as the guitarist Frank Deniz recalled in an interview made in the last part of his career. Deniz noted that in the 1930s there were not many black people in London and those whom he met in the clubs were people working in entertainment. People from the Caribbean in London were involved in trade activities with the Caribbean and in most cases they were not resident in England. The few Caribbean people that he originally knew had arrived from Paris and Martinique, and worked in the entertainment business. Indeed, he recalled that most artists, including Americans, tended to go to Paris and not stay in London. Deniz thought this was linked to the different atmosphere a migrant arriving in the two contexts experienced because they were British subjects from the Caribbean in Britain, whereas they were French citizens in France: "in England and London there was nothing for them," he concluded.[57]

The spread of black genres of music involved musicians coming to London and Paris from outside national borders, as we have seen. Still, in this diffusion French and British musicians also played an important part.

[56] Sue Steward, 'Ros, Edmundo (1910–2011)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press; online edn, January 2015), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/104277, accessed 21 September 2015.
[57] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.

The musicians who arrived in London and Paris from outside national British and French borders became active members of the two cities' music scenes, entering into contact with other musicians from outside but also with English and French musicians. Some of these native musicians were born in Paris or London, and in several cases they were geographically mobile finding musical employment in both cities. For instance, the Parisian Philippe Brun, born in 1908, studied violin at the Paris Conservatoire, then switched to trumpet and was active on the Parisian jazz scene. In 1929 Brun moved to London to be part of the English pianist and bandleader Jack Hylton's band, and remained there until 1936 when he returned to France. He worked in various bands before being forced to leave France during the Second World War to go to Switzerland, and came back to France after the end of the war.[58]

Several musicians had life experiences outside their own country, and were afterwards active on their hometown music scene. This was in some instances due to their studies at musical institutes. For example, Patrick "Spike" Hughes studied orchestration and conducting in Vienna and Berlin in the 1920s before going back to London where, as a self-taught bass player and arranger, he started working in the musical scene of the city.[59]

In others cases it was due to their families' movements, such as the life of the pianist and singer Rita Cann shows. Born in 1911, Cann grew up in South London. Her father's affairs - he was a commerce entrepreneur from the Gold Coast, - took the young Rita initially to Germany, then during the 1920s to Vienna and eventually to Amsterdam. In the latter, she had the chance to hear Latin music when she saw the Cuban band the Lecuona Cuban Boys, and their performance piqued her interest for Latin music. Back in London after her father's death in 1934, she joined the circle of black intellectuals and artists who met at the African American singer John Payne's flat, and started working in various bands as dancer and singer, including Leslie Thompson's and Rudolph Dunbar's. In the 1940s the meeting with Don Marino Barreto had a big impact on her career. In 1943 she joined Barreto's band as second pianist and playing maracas, and in 1946 she formed her own band named the Havana Sextet.[60] The career of Cann exemplifies both the influence of their personal experiences linked to mobility could have on

[58] Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz*, 49.
[59] Chilton, 183.
[60] Val Wilmer, 'Cann, Rita Evelyn (1911–2001)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, January 2005; online edn, January 2009), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/75858, accessed 21 Sept 2015; Rita Cann, interview by Val Wilmer, 16 November 1990, C122/110, BL NSA.

musicians - in the case of Cann the first contact with Cuban music in Amsterdam, - and the connections that musicians born inside national borders made with those arriving from outside in the music scene.

London and Paris also attracted musicians born in Britain or France who found in the music scenes of the two cities places where their careers could develop. They followed a path of migration internal to national borders, more precisely from provincial cities. In particular, port cities played an important role in this sense. They were areas of contact for groups of musicians and for some of these they were points of departure for their careers, which would find further development in the capitals.

In the French context, Bordeaux was one of these points of departure for several musicians. For instance, the pianist Stéphane Mougin from Bordeaux moved to Paris in 1925 in order to study at the Paris Conservatoire, and he started to play jazz while studying classical music. He built his career as musician and arranger, and supported and sponsored musicians such as the guitarist Django Reinhardt and the violinist Stéphane Grappelli. He eventually moved to the United States in 1934.[61]

Another French port city that played a part in the movements of musicians towards Paris and also with regard to the general development of jazz in France was Marseille. The city's role as an important port of the French Empire located on the Mediterranean enabled social and cultural contacts between people arriving there from different parts of the world.[62] The Marseille entertainment scene was very lively, based upon music halls and clubs. The shows presented multiple forms of entertainment, both linked to local traditions and externally influenced by Parisian fashions and international trends. In addition, Marseille played a notable role in the film industry with studios for film production and distribution, and a large number of cinemas proliferated in the city. The spread of jazz in this context was a fundamental element of the Marseille music scene starting in the 1930s, which further develop in the 1940s with the presence of black soldiers who were also musicians.[63] The liveliness of the city made Marseille a "convincing cultural counterweight to the capital," as the scholar Nicholas Hewitt has described it.[64]

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[61] Olivier Roueff, 'Stéphane Mougin et l'organisation professionnelle d'un marché musicien du jazz', *Jazz, les échelles du plaisir* (blog), 2013, http://www.plaisirsdujazz.fr/chapitre-trois-sommaire/stephane-mougin-et-lorganisation-professionnelle-dun-marche-musicien-du-jazz/.

[62] On Marseille see Pascal Blanchard and Gilles Boëtsch, eds., *Marseille, Porte Sud. Un Siècle D'histoire Coloniale et D'immigration* (Paris: La Découverte, 2005)

[63] Shack, *Harlem in Montmartre*, 129–30.

[64] Nicholas Hewitt, '"Marseille Qui Jazz": Popular Culture in the Second City', *French History and Civilization: Papers from the George Rudé Seminar* 2 (2009): 61.

Several musicians started their musical path in Marseille and then went to Paris. In some cases, their careers began with musical training done in both cities. For instance, the pianist Léo Chauliac began his musical studies in Marseille, but then at the end of the 1920s moved to Paris in order to study at the Paris conservatoire. It was in the capital that he started to play jazz at the beginning of the 1930s, as he recalled years later: "j'ai dû faire du metier au sens déplaisant du terme. À ce moment là je me suis mis au jazz." Indeed, he started working at Le Fétiche, a bar on rue la Fontaine in the Pigalle area, and entered into contact with both French and non-French jazz musicians who frequented the bar. Thereafter he was part of the city's musical scene.[65]

In the British context, some musicians active in London arrived from greater Manchester, such as the bandleader and impresario Jack Hylton, the Tyree brothers Monteith and Henry (saxophonist and reeds player, respectively) whose father was African American,[66] and the singer Mabel Mercer whom we will find later on as Bricktop's associate in Paris; and from the port city of Cardiff. In particular, from the latter came a group of musicians who, especially from the mid 1930s, found in the London music scene the possibility to develop their careers. Thanks to the availability of both biographical information and oral sources (interviews which are part of the "Oral history of jazz in Britain" collection) it is possible to reconstruct their movements more precisely. Thus, in order to give a quite detailed example of the high mobility of these musicians I will devote closer attention to this group of musicians.

The docks area of Cardiff, known as Tiger Bay, had acquired a multicultural character thanks to the port activities and the settlement of an ethnically diverse population starting at the end of the nineteenth century.[67] Racial relations were quite difficult. The black population mostly lived in a specific part of the city, and in 1919 Cardiff was one of the British centres where race riots took place.[68] The most popular genres of music in the area had Caribbean origins. In particular

[65] He later worked in Cannes, made recordings through the contacts he had with Charles Delaunay and in the 1940s was back to Paris. Vian, 'Jazz-Hot n.10 - novembre 1946 Léo Chauliac'.
[66] Howard Rye, 'Towards Black British Jazz: Studies in Acculturation, 1860-1935', in *Black British Jazz: Routes, Ownership and Performance* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 37.
[67] See Neil Evans, 'Immigrants and Minorities in Wales, 1840-1990: A Comparative Perspective', in *A Tolerant Nation?: Revisiting Ethnic Diversity in a Devolved Wales*, 2nd ed. (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015), 128–52.
[68] On the 1919 riots in Britain see Jacqueline Jenkinson, *Black 1919: Riots, Racism and Resistance in Imperial Britain* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2009), and part III of the volume Stephen Bourne, *Black Poppies: Britain's Black Community and the Great War* (Stroud: The History Press, 2014). An analysis of the riots in Wales, with a longer-range perspective, has been done by Neil Evans, 'Through the Prism of Ethnic Violence: Riots and Racial Attacks in Wales, 1826-2014', in *A Tolerant Nation?: Revisiting Ethnic Diversity in a Devolved Wales*, 2nd ed., 24–50 vols (Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2015).

calypso – the style of music born on the island of Trinidad – circulated through early records.[69] The experience on the Cardiff music scene was crucial for those musicians who moved to London, as it permitted them to perform Caribbean music in the capital. This in turn allowed them to be included in the London music scene and to enter into contact with other musicians and styles of music, in particular with jazz, which, for some of them, was both a source of inspiration and an aspiration. As Catherine Tackley has underlined, their ability to adapt and to be musically flexible was fundamental for their careers in London, as the high demand for black performances in the city could find multiple musical translations when put into practice, and they could be requested to play American or Caribbean styles of music, which were equally labelled as black for the general public.[70]

At the same time, Tiger Bay's music scene influenced these musicians in their paths. As the calypso is predominantly played with string instruments, many of these musicians played these types of instruments, which was something that at times conditioned their ability to find employment on the London market when the genres of music in vogue privileged other instruments, such as brass, instruments linked to jazz.

Among the first musicians who went to London was Victor Parker. He was born in Cardiff from Barbadian parents in 1910, and started playing the trombone in the Salvation Army's Junior Band. Not until he moved to Tiger Bay did he switch to the guitar. Contact with Caribbean and West African seamen was fundamental for his learning, and he also took lessons from George Glossop, a well-known guitarist in the area. With Glossop's son George he created a guitar duo and went to London to play Hawaiian music, in fashion at that time.[71] When Parker came back to Cardiff he started playing with the singer Don Johnson. Johnson's father, a man of Barbudan origin, had moved with his family in an area of the city distant from Tiger Bay and forbade his sons to go there. Nonetheless, Johnson started frequenting Tiger Bay's bars and cafés – many of which were brothels – realising that he could get money performing in those places. Don Johnson travelled to London various times to play in the city with other musicians from Cardiff, initially not very successfully. In 1937 he eventually proposed himself to the bandleader Ken Johnson who was in Cardiff during his tour, and become a member of his band after an audition. From that moment until the end of his career Don Johnson was active on the

[69] Catherine Tackley, 'Tiger Bay and the Roots/Routes of Black British Jazz', in *Black British Jazz: Routes, Ownership and Performance* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 43–48.
[70] Tackley, 52–53.
[71] Val Wilmer, "Parker, (Henry) Victor (1910–1978)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/75564, accessed 21 September 2015.

London entertainment scene, both as a singer and as an actor.[72] Parker and Don Johnson are two examples that show the importance of the musical background made in an area such as Tiger Bay for being able to play in London various genres of music. Don Johnson's musical path found an important point of departure in the house of other musicians, who started their careers in Cardiff and eventually moved to London: the Deniz brothers.

Frank, Joe and Laurie Deniz[73] were the sons of a sailor from the Cape Verde islands, and of a woman with English and African American origins. Their musical interest began in their house: their father played the violin, the mandolin and the guitar and their mother played the piano, and they hosted musical sessions with other Cape Verdeans, usually on Sundays. Like other Cardiff musicians, the brothers became familiar with calypso and other Caribbean styles of music through contact with the city's Caribbean community. Their father took the eldest brothers Frank and Joe to work on ships, thus they had the chance to enter into contact with music styles from various parts of the world. Frank had the longest experience on ships, and worked as a seaman for ten years. This experience was fundamental for his musical training. Thinking about that time years later, he recalled that everywhere he went with the ship he used to listen to the local radio and go to clubs where he saw local musicians, in particular guitarists who would influence his own style. This is how he came to know genres of music such as rumba and tango that were different from what he listened to in England at that time and that were very inspiring. Moreover, he bought his first guitar while working as a seaman and used it to practise on the ship and to play in nightclubs while travelling.[74] This shows how personal experiences that formed musicians' backgrounds were important for their activity as musicians in the London music scene. Indeed, musicians whose personal experiences were characterised by encounters with various musical cultures, were more capable of adapting to play a variety of genres during their careers.

Joe Deniz, as soon as he could, stopped working on ships, and joined Parker in London. As the employment in the club finished, he returned to Cardiff, where he played with Parker, his brother Frank and the pianist Clara Wason, Frank's future wife. Clara was the daughter of a seaman from Barbados, and of an Englishwoman. As Clara's father died in the first years of her life, she grew up with her mother in Mrs Knight's home, a woman of mixed origins who came

[72] Val Wilmer, 'Johnson, Don (1911–1994)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2015), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/76163, accessed 21 September 2015; Don Johnson, interview by Val Wilmer, 14 April 1988, C122/42/1-2, BL NSA.
[73] For practical reasons, I will use the nicknames that the three brothers used instead of their real names that are indicated in the references.
[74] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.

from a family active in the theatre circuit, and was married to a Caribbean seaman. It was in that environment that Clara was exposed to music, and learned to play the piano.[75] Joe, Frank and Clara went to London in 1936, determined to work in the music entertainment industry in the capital. Joe found work in the Nest, a nightclub located in Carnaby Street frequented by many American musicians on tour in London. At the beginning he was employed as a drummer, but soon was able to return to playing guitar and join first Happy Blake's band, and then the all coloured band formed by Leslie Thompson and Ken Johnson.

As one can notice in the aforementioned cases, musicians who arrived in London from inside national borders had the possibility to return to their hometown, in particular when they found difficulties in finding employment, and go back to London to seek their fortune again. This is indicative of their high mobility and of their ability to be active in at least two music scenes, which was deeply linked to their flexibility in adapting to the different demands and tastes.

In this chapter I have examined three main routes that led black musicians to Paris and London. This reconstruction aims at showing the relevance of mobility and backgrounds to grasp the diversity amongst the musicians who performed black genres of music in the cities. Both capitals had complex histories that would make them important international centres for entertainment, offering opportunities to work in the music business. By tracing the movements of musicians in the timeframe of the interwar years, both a regional and a transatlantic character. In various cases, imperial or national structures provided the basis for starting musical careers through military bands in the colonies. The two capitals also possessed musical institutions such as conservatoires, and boosted events, such as international expositions that could attract and promote musicians. Moreover, informal contacts especially through bandleaders were in some cases behind musicians' movements. It is worth underlining how in various instances the paths musicians undertook would often lead them to both Paris and London. This mobility resulted in a high degree of fluidity within the music scenes of both these urban realities and musicians moved in the urban spaces often performing various genres of music.

[75] John Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz: 2nd Edition* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 105–106; Val Wilmer, "Deniz, Francisco Antonio (1912-2005)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2011), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/95285, accessed 21 September 2015; Val Wilmer, "Deniz, José William (1913-1994)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, January 2009), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/76164, accessed 21 September 2015.

Musicians travelling to the two cities would bring with them their own experiences, as well as the social, cultural and musical history of their countries of origin. The reconstruction of their personal lives, also provides insight into the multiple levels of their musical backgrounds, including geographical origin, social position and cultural formation. Understanding their background was important to analyse their careers especially because of the exposure to different genres of music that many of them received. Often their cultural origins and their personal experiences, linked both to their mobility in the first part of their lives (e.g. intra-Caribbean movements) and to their experiences in specific social and cultural contexts (e.g. the multicultural environment of Tiger Bay in Cardiff), made them able to adapt to perform various genres of music and play together with musicians of different origins.

As can be seen in the example of Don Barreto's articles on rumba, published in the journal *Jazz-Tango*, the importance of personal background would be expressed in works that aimed at presenting specific music genres.

As we have hitherto seen, the arrival of musicians, their musical activities in the cities, the encounters they made there, all contributed to the liveliness of urban spaces and to the processes of musical evolution. Moreover, different actors operated in the entertainment circuit and played a fundamental role in making music. In many cases, musicians built their careers assuming different roles, thus profiting from and contributing to the fluidity of the two urban contexts.

Chapter 3

Musical Activities in Urban Spaces: Cooperation in the Music Scenes

The artist […] works in the center of
a network of cooperating people,
all of whose work is essential
to the final outcome.
Wherever he depends on others,
a cooperative links exists.[1]
Howard S. Becker
Art Worlds
(1982)

"All artistic work, like all human activity, involves the joint activity of a number, often a large number, of people. Through their cooperation, the art work we eventually see or hear comes to be and continues to be."[2] As Howard Becker has expressed with these words, an artistic work is not solely the result of the artist's effort. Rather, it is the result of a cooperative effort. This is an element that has been often forgotten in the study of artistic activities, including those devoted to music. In order to be heard, musical works require the realisation of other elements besides the creative idea put into practice by the musician, namely the availability of spaces where music can be created, distributed and heard, and the contribution of people working in these spaces performing a series of activities necessary for the realisation of the musical work.

Historical analyses of music have tended to overlook this aspect, and have more often concentrated on their subjects – usually musicians and specific genres of music - as separate from this network of cooperation. This is true also for specific studies on black genres of music and on black musicians. These have tended to explore this specific history as a separate bloc in an effort to include black people and black cultural forms in historiography.[3]

[1] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 25.
[2] Becker, 1.
[3] One recent structured reconstruction of the activities within the British entertainment industry during World War I is Chapter 1 "Portrait of an Industry: Producing Popular Music, 1914-1918" in Mullen, *The Show Must Go On!*, 7–31.

More generally, David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker have underlined how, until recently, studies on cultural production have lacked focus on creative labour. This is partly because of a tendency of modern societies to ignore labour in the cultural industries. Often, this resulted either in a focus on individual producers rather than on the complex division of labour, or on a focus on consumption at the expense of production. Only in recent years have studies on creative work expanded.[4] As the editors of the volume *Theorizing Cultural Work. Labour, Continuity and Change in the Cultural and Creative Industries* (2013) mention, research and debates on cultural work that have expanded since the 1990s, have seldom applied "an explicitly historical lens." Therefore, the effort of the authors is to challenge what they perceive as a "historical lack in the critical literature" and "reflect more fully on cultural work in terms of its (arguably) more complex and variegated social pasts."[5] By following in their footsteps, this chapter aims at grasping the complexity of music production through a reconstruction of the activities that were necessary for music production within urban music scenes.

The specific relationship between music and labour has not been extensively explored until recently. A group of scholars has analysed the history and influence of music in the working environment in Britain, by drawing attention to the singing cultures of pre-industrial labour, the silencing effect of industrialisation and the use of the factory radio. In this case, music has been analysed as a crucial component of working activities.[6]

The lack of studies on this relationship has not been limited to investigations on music, on the contrary it has regarded studies on leisure, too. As Ben Carrington has underlined in the introduction to a special issue in the journal *Leisure Studies* published in 2008, the relationship between labour and leisure has been one of the main problematics in the field. The idea that has commonly prevailed is a conceptualisation of leisure as time spent outside work. The contributions to the special issue challenged this idea of leisure as 'non work,' and rethought the history of leisure.[7] In particular, the historian Karl Hagstrom Miller addresses this question regarding music. Miller maintains that the idea of music as effortless, which has dominated studies on music, has tended to disregard the fact that music is a form of labour. Indeed, what he defines as the "mask of effortlessness," has historically influenced the ways in which music

[4] David Hesmondhalgh and Sarah Baker, *Creative Labour: Media Work in Three Cultural Industries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2011), 55–60.
[5] Mark Banks, Rosalind Gill, and Stephanie Taylor, eds., *Theorizing Cultural Work. Labour, Continuity and Change in the Cultural and Creative Industries* (London: Routledge, 2013), 5.
[6] Marek Korczynski, Michael Pickering, and Emma Robertson, *Rhythms of Labour: Music at Work in Britain* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2013).
[7] Ben Carrington, 'Introduction: Rethinking Labour and Leisure', *Leisure Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2008): 396–374.

has been understood: "without evidence of the work required to train and perform, it has become far easier to imagine music as a direct outgrowth of personal genius, natural talent or even a simple product of one's social identity."[8] Contrary to this approach, Miller analyses music as a kind of labour, focusing on the activities required to make music such as learning an instrument, preparing a repertoire and performing music. His approach conceives music as a craft, in the sense that it involves the acquisition of specific skills, and aims at expanding "the landscape of the professional music world" in scholarship, for example including teachers in the analysis. Miller affirms that "a focus on musical labour can help us historicise and remain sensitive to the effects of the Western valorisation of musical works over musical work, composition over performance."[9] Nevertheless, while this approach has the important merit of recognising the value of music as labour, its results are limited because it does not take into consideration all the activities that are necessary for making music which constitute what Becker has defined as a network of cooperation. Conceiving music as labour in the way Miller does, allows an unveiling of activities that are part of the process of making music but ignores another group of fundamental activities without which the process would not exist.

This chapter reconstructs the network of the main activities that made making music possible in the music scenes of Paris and London. It paints a more complete portrait of the music scenes of the two cities by identifying the various activities that were essential for the genres of music under examination to circulate. In the years which followed the end of the First World War, the division of labour within the music scenes was in part linked to developments which dated back to previous decades, such as the case of shops dedicated to the manufacture of musical instruments founded in the nineteenth century, but was also strictly linked to the modifications that music scenes experienced due to the spread of jazz and dance music. Moreover, the spread of black genres of music in the two cities was closely connected to the vibrancy of their music scenes. This liveliness is well exemplified by the activities that the actors who operated in those scenes performed, and the roles that they came to play in those contexts. In various cases the roles were subjected to change, as the urban contexts were flexible enough to allow some of their actors to play different roles at different moments, and also to make these roles overlap.

In this chapter, which is divided into six sections, I have made extensive use of advertisements published in city guides and musical journals as sources, especially in the first

[8] Karl Hagstrom Miller, 'Working Musicians: Exploring the Rhetorical Ties Between Musical Labour and Leisure', *Leisure Studies* 27, no. 4 (October 2008): 428.
[9] Miller, 438–39.

three sections of the chapter. A close examination of the magazines *Melody Maker*, *Jazz-Tango*, and *L'artiste musicien de Paris*, has allowed me to reconstruct, on the one hand, part of the urban setting where the activities regarding musical instruments were performed, and on the other, the ways in which they were presented in the music scenes.

The *Melody Maker* was founded in January 1926 and published monthly by the "Lawrence Wright Ltd." Company, located in Denmark Street. The editorial which opened the first issue, written by Edgar Jackson, explained that the reason which led to the publication of the journal was the "lack of co-ordination between the many branches of the entertainment profession."[10] Thus, the journal's scope was to give up-to-date information of the various branches of entertainment and the magazine became one of the most influent music journals of the period.[11] The journal was addressed to a public formed by both professional and amateur musicians as well as fans. Max Jones, a semi-professional musician and journalist, recalled that when he was young the journal was "the source of all information." They had one copy in the class and used to pass it around, playing a question and answer game on musicians based on news items found inside.[12]

Shortly after the *Melody Maker* was first published the magazine *Jazz-Tango* was founded in Paris in October 1930, with the aim of spreading jazz music within France and promoting French jazz musicians. During its existence, it merged with other journals such as *Dancing* and in 1936 with *L'Orchestre*. In both the *Melody Maker* and *Jazz-Tango* musicians wrote articles in addition to critics and journalists, and both magazines devoted attention to various genres of music to dancing.

Compared to these two journals, *L'artiste musicien de Paris* had a different and longer history. Founded in 1914 and published monthly, the magazine was the organ of the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens, the musicians' union in Paris. Thus, the issues treated in the journal were linked to the union's views and ideas.

In this chapter I analyse the various activities that were performed in the musical network and that were essential to make music in the music scenes of London and Paris. I draw attention to the spaces in which these activities took place, to the people who performed the activities and to those who entered into contact with them in the spaces. The sections can be grouped in

[10] *Melody Maker* I, no. 1 (January 1926): 1.
[11] Nick Johnstone, *Melody Maker. History of 20th Century Popular Music* (London: Bloomsbury, 1999).
[12] Max Jones, interview by Brian Priestley, 31 March 1988, C122/41, BL NSA.

two parts. The first - formed by the first three sections, - explores the activities linked to the creation of the musical work in a material sense, thus it is dedicated to the making and selling of instruments, publishing activity, and recording. The second part investigates the distribution of the musical work after it has taken a material form, and highlights human agency. It pays attention to people who owned or ran nightclubs, to intermediary figures between owners and musicians, and to those figures who contributed to establish the reputation of the musical works, such as critics. In this sense, this division matches Paul Théberge's idea of the first two moments in the life of a commodity that he developed in his book on the role of digital technology in the production of music *Any Sound You Can Imagine: Making Music/Consuming Technology* (1997): design/production and mediation. Théberge derived his approach from a study on the motor scooter written by Dick Hebdige in 1981 that analysed the scooter not as a single object but as several objects existing at distinct "moments:" design/production, mediation (marketing and promotion), and consumption/use. These moments are independent but also linked with each other and with larger contexts in "networks of relationships."[13]

[13] Paul Théberge, *Any Sound You Can Imagine: Making Music/Consuming Technology* (Hanover and London: Wesleyan University Press, 1997), 9–11; Dick Hebdige, 'Object as Image: The Italian Scooter Cycle', *Block* 5 (44-64): 1981.

A fundamental activity in the network of professional occupations that allow music to be produced is the manufacturing of instruments and their commercial distribution. This activity was carried out in specific places in the urban space that were usually located in the same areas where music was played, such as the West End of London and the area of Montmartre in Paris. Music shops offered a various range of services: in these spaces instruments were made, repaired, sold, and bought from musicians who wanted to sell their instruments.

Several music firms had a long history that dated back to the nineteenth or even eighteenth centuries. In the 1920s and 1930s, the diffusion of jazz music saw instruments such as saxophones increasingly employed in bands, and they were therefore in more demand on the commercial market. As a result, in both Paris and London, shops that sold a wide range of instruments, included these new types of instruments in their catalogue, and shops that specialised in making and selling this kind of equipment began to appear.

Due to the spread of dance music, shops that sold various instruments gave emphasis to the typical instruments used in dance and jazz music. For instance, the music shop Gervex located in area of Montmartre in Paris and founded in 1850, in its advertisement published in the journal *L'artiste musicien de Paris*, emphasised the fact that the shop had all that concerned jazz by putting the sentence "Tout ce qui concerne le jazz" at the centre and the word jazz was highlighted using bold type.

L'artiste musicien de Paris XIV, No.132 (Janvier 1929): 25
BnF, Paris

In a similar way, the advertisement of another shop located in the area of Montmartre called "La Maison du Jazz," highlighted the fact that it offered instruments for dancing bands by using the sentence "Tout ce qui concerne les orchestra de danse" at the centre.

L'artiste musicien de Paris XIV, No.132 (Janvier 1929): 26
BnF, Paris

Another example of this kind of advertisement is the one that appeared in the pamphlet *The Story of Soho* (1925) promoting the publishing company J. R. Lafleur & Son. The company also had a section dedicated to the making of instruments that in the previous years had expanded. The advertisement emphasised the fact that the services of saxophone players were required at parties and dances, thus it encouraged the readers to learn to play the saxophone with the rhetorical question "why not start learning to-day and make your pleasures pay for themselves."[14] In later years, with the diffusion of Latin music, a similar emphasis on particular instruments was put on Latin music percussions, as can be seen in advertisements such as the one published in July 1932 in the *Melody Maker* which publicised maracas percussions.[15]

In Paris music shops tended to be located in Montmartre and the neighbouring areas of the VIII and X arrondissements. One of the shops devoted specifically to jazz was the "Stand du Jazz", which opened on 15th September 1934 and was located close to place Pigalle. The

[14] G. C. Wilton, *The Story of Soho* (Gloucester: British Publishing, 1925), 34.
[15] *Melody Maker* VII, no. 79, (July 1932): 604.

advertisement made for the opening and published in the magazine *Jazz-Tango*, is another example that shows the importance that dance music had acquired for music shops.

Jazz-Tango Dancing V, No.47 (Août 1934): 29
BnF, Paris

The advertisement highlighted that the shop had been created for dance musicians and that it would become the "rendez-vous des musiciens de la danse," thus it promoted the shop as a meeting space for them. In addition, it would be a reference point for musicians willing to form an orchestra or looking for replacement musicians.

The advertisements in some cases directly addressed musicians in very effective ways, as the company "Clifford Essex" located in Mayfair in London did in its advertisement published in the *Melody Maker* in 1931 that publicised an American brand of saxophones. The title was the question "Will you be 'somebody' a year from now?," and the caption pointed to the fact that there were a lot of good saxophone players in England who could become great players but if they had a saxophone of that brand they would had an advantage over the others: becoming a star player required "the 'will to do' and the opportunity to do it. In saying the 'will to do' we mean the desire – the ambition to really be somebody. To succeed and gain public favour. If

you possess the 'will to do' you should play a Buescher saxophone, and when your opportunity arrives you will have a distinct advantage over the player not so equipped. […] You will find it comparatively easy matter to be 'somebody' and not merely just 'another saxophone player.'"[16]

In several cases, the advertisements that publicised specific instruments for jazz bands such as saxophones, explicitly referred to the United States in order to promote their quality as instruments for playing jazz music. For instance, the Parisian firm Buffet-Crampton in its advertisement, published in *L'artiste musicien de Paris* in 1938, said that saxophones produced by the company were initially made for American jazz musicians and that those who wanted to play modern jazz should play them.

L'artiste musicien de Paris XXIII, No.240 (Février 1938): 27
BnF, Paris

This advertisement is a clear example of how the reference to American bands was used to attract musicians and was presented as a sort of guarantee of the quality of instruments required to play "modern" jazz music.

The spread of Latin rhythms also helped shops that sold typical instruments and their related advertisements to appear in journals. For instance, in July 1931 the store Boosey & Hawkes located in Regent Street published an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* that presented a special offer for the maracas that they produced.

[16] *Melody Maker* VI, no. 61 , (January 1931): 22.

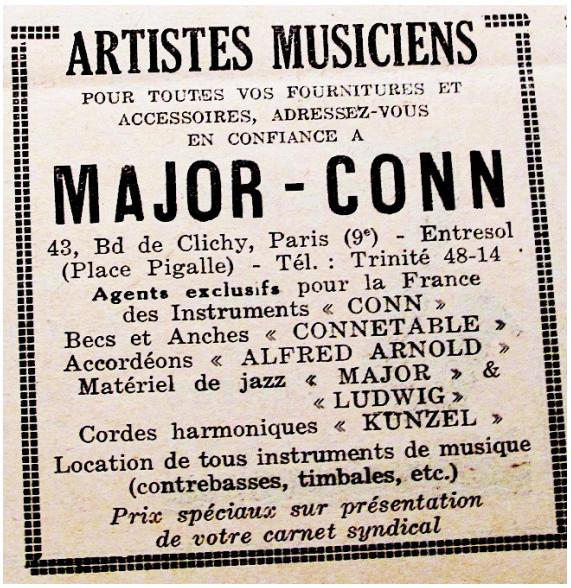
Melody Maker VI, No.67 (July 1932): 604
BL, London.

The maracas were presented as a novelty for drummers, and the advertisement highlighted the quality of the maracas that Boosey and Hawkes produced. The special offer for a pair of maracas with the coupon that readers could obtain through the advertisement, was made to attract people to buy the instrument, and significantly the advertisement aimed at persuading people to buy them underlining the need to keep up with the times with the final sentence: "buy a pair now and be in the fashion."

In other cases, several firms pointed to the fact that the instruments were made in the country in order to show the quality of the instruments. For instance, the firm "Clifford Essex," published and advertisement in the *Melody Maker* in 1931 which highlighted that all the instruments were manufactured by "highly skilled British craftsmen."

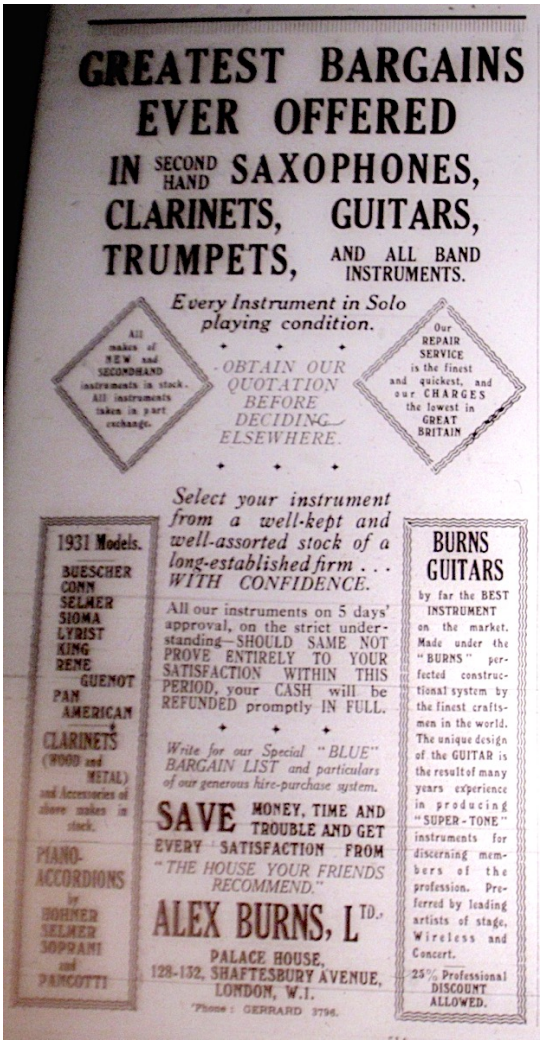
Melody Maker VI, n. 72 (December 1931): 1032
BL, London.

The firms used advertisements in order to affirm their reliability, and often the language chosen exemplified this aim. For instance, the firm "Major-Conn" located in the area of the Place Pigalle in Paris in its advertisement published in *L'artiste musicien de Paris* in 1938 exhorted musicians to rely on the shop for their needs using the word "confidence."



L'artiste musicien de Paris XXIII, No.240 (Février 1938): 27
BnF, Paris

In addition to the sale of instruments, a large number of music shops performed various services which included instrument repair, and they offered specialised technical assistance to clients. With regard to these services too, the advertisements often emphasised the high level of quality that shops provided. For example, the music shop "Alex Burns Ltd.," located in Soho, published an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* which emphasised that the shop offered second hand band instruments from renowned firms at advantageous prices, and a repair service of high quality that was presented as charging the lowest price in Great Britain.

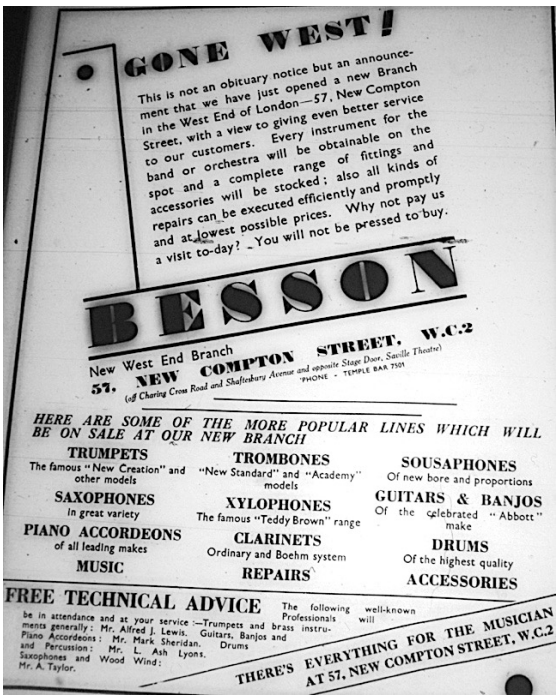


Melody Maker VI, No.66 (June 1931): 514
BL, London.

In this case too, the advertisement pointed to the fact that musicians could rely on the quality of the services that the shop offered. It did so by using specific words, written using bold type

or upper case, such as "confidence," saying that they could choose second-hand instruments and trust their quality, and "satisfaction," stating that they could benefit from the favourable prices, and the quick and good services; thus it labelled the shop as "the house your friends recommend."

The services that shops offered required the employment of people with specific skills. This element could add value to the shop and for that reason this element was sometimes emphasised in the advertisements. For instance, in 1932 the shop "Besson" published an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* regarding the opening of a new branch in the West End, and highlighted that the shop offered "free technical advice" to musicians through "well-known professionals," who appeared with their names, and who specialised in different instruments, such as brass instruments, string instruments, drums etc.



Melody Maker VII, No.79 (July 1932): 568
BL, London.

A large number of music shops devoted to musical instruments had records collections on sale to clients, but there were also specific stores exclusively dedicated to the sale of records. With the spread of jazz music, several shops dedicated advertisements specifically to records of this genre of music. For instance, the shop "City Sale," located in Fleet Street in London -

the boundary between Westminster and the City of London - published an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* which emphasised the fact that the shop specialised in swing records.

Melody Maker XIII, n. 202 (3 April 1937): 12
BL, London.

The London-born clarinettist Monty Sunshine recalled that in the early days of jazz music it was difficult to obtain jazz records, and that shops were one of the main ways through which a player or a jazz fan could buy records. For Sunshine the run to the store was full of enthusiasm, but also accompanied by an expectation of uncertain results:

> in the early days one found it very difficult to get jazz records, you looked at the catalogue find a record in limited edition and you rushed to the jazz close shop and ask if they can get it for you which could happen or not.[17]

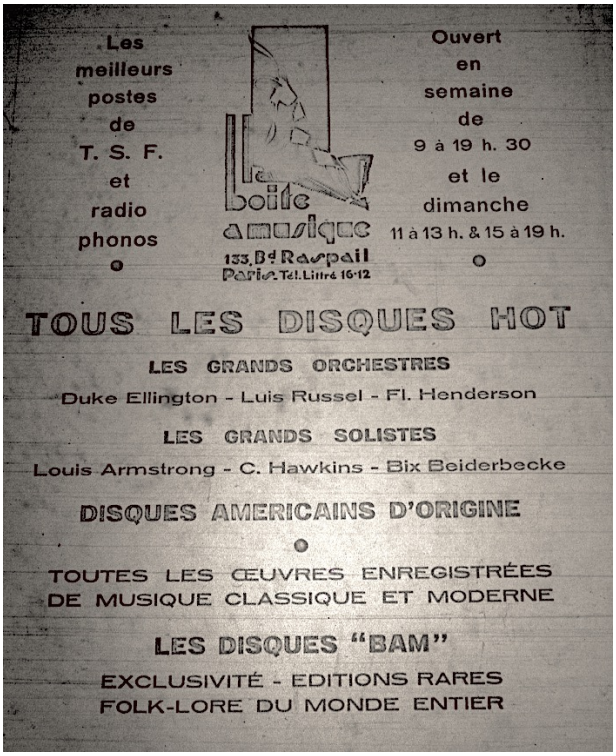
In Paris, French journals specifically devoted to jazz gave space to shop advertisements that promoted jazz records, as the advertisement published in the review *Jazz Hot* in April 1935 shows. Three of the shops were located in the area of Montmartre, while a fourth shop was

[17] Monty Sunshine, interview by Dave Gelly, 21 November 1994, BL NSA.

located close to the Champs-Élysées. One of the shops offered the opportunity to exchange records, a fact that indicates how records were spread, especially among fans of specific genres of music.

Jazz Hot I, No.2 (Avril 1935): 30
BnF, Paris

Among the Parisian shops was La Boîte à Musique in Montparnasse, which was a very popular store among jazz fans. As an advertisement published in the journal *Jazz Hot* in 1935 shows, the shop was open seven days a week and their clients could find a variety of records, including records of "hot" jazz.



Jazz Hot I, No.1 (Mars 1935): 18
BnF, Paris

The owner's son, Jean-Louis Levy-Alvarez, was a member of the Hot Club de France, and the basement of the store served as location for the first concerts organised by the club that began in 1933. The owner publicised the events to his clients. One of them happened to be Charles Delaunay who had gone to the store to buy a record that he had heard on the radio.[18] This is how Delaunay was introduced for the first time to the members of the club and he vividly recalled that experience years later. It was the winter of 1932-33 and Delaunay had begun to think that he was the only one to love the new jazz music. One day, however, while he was on military service, he listened to a radio program on the station Poste Parisien in which the speaker Jacques Canetti presented jazz records. He was amazed by a record of Duke Ellington's orchestra and as soon as he had free time he went to La Boîte à Musique to buy it. There he met Jean-Louis Levy-Alvarez; a meeting that would prove to be fundamental in Delaunay's life. He had entered the shop hesitantly, thinking that he would be mocked, but he discovered what he labelled a "new universe:"

[18] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 160–63.

> Quel ne fut pas mon étonnement lorsque le jeune vendeur, constatant mon intérêt pour cette musique, me proposa d'écouter d'autres disques de jazz, plus merveilleux les uns quel es autres! J'étais aux anges! […] Il me demanda si je connaissais le Hot Club de France qui allait justement présenter son troisième concert quelques jour plus tard, dans un sous-sol voisin. Imaginez ma joie! J'avais enfin trouvé un ami, mieux, toute une famille avec laquelle je pouvais partager mon enthousiasme pour cette musique. Un nouvel univers s'ouvrit à moi.[19]

In 1946 Stanley Jackson in his guide to Soho described one of the music shops in the area, giving us a lively representation of these spaces. The shop was located in Shaftesbury Avenue, one of the main streets on the edge of Soho, and it was owned by a former dance band musician named Barney Lubelle. Even if it was a shop that specialised in saxophones, one could buy anything, and there was a lot of coming and going of people:

> […] People were dashing in and out. One wanted a guitar pick, another a clarinet mouthpiece, a third desired a newly-published trumpet "tutor." A lean and hungry-looking youth, who appeared to be in need of a sanatorium, wanted some "washers for his high hats." This request turned out to be for the felts used for resting the cymbals! A big man in a lengthy racoon coat, of the type worn by college boys, wanted his drum brakes repaired. A little chap with a squint and a bow tie offered his sax for sale. All kind of odd-looking types find their way to Barney, who also supplies serious orchestras with instruments, wet-nurses Service welfare centres and offers good advice to elderly Soho natives who have suddenly decided to take up music.[20]

A big part of the shop's activity was instrument repair, which was done in a workshop behind the store. Two apprentices - sons of two West End dance musicians - were busy repairing and overhauling various instruments all the time. Moreover, the shop was a place where people went to talk about music, in particular young people:

[19] Charles Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma: de la peinture au jazz* (Mâcon: Editions W, 1985), 57.
[20] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 58.

> Dozens of young "jivers," average age 18, make a bee-line for the sax shop. They want reeds, felts, new drum-stick and a dozen odds and ends, but their real need is to talk swing and run caressing fingers over the shiny instruments that mean so much to them. With them "hot" jazz is an obsession.[21]

As the cases of the shop described by Jackson and La Boîte à Musique show, record stores were places where the latest records could be found and heard. With the variety of services offered, they often became places of encounter for musicians and people interested in music.

[21] Jackson, 48–49.

> Walk into the offices of any song publisher in Charing Cross Road and you enter a world in which a crooner has the privileges of Royalty and a dance band leader the prerogatives of an archangel. Here is a business in which […] millions of sheets of music are churned out by the presses until the errand boy in Lewisham and the coolie in Lahore have whistled it.[22]

The role played by publishers in the cooperative musical network was important as it was the connection between composers and arrangers, and it was an important link that made songs reach the audience. Stanley Jackson, in his book *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho* (1946) well described the work of publishers in London. The publisher first needed to find good tunes among the large number of songs that composers sent to his office. It often happened that publishers bought a song on the basis of an excerpt, which they deemed to be good and employed their own composers and arrangers to rewrite it. Then the publisher sold the sheet of music to the retailer and distributed many free copies for the song to be heard by as many people as possible.

Publishers had their offices and shops in the cities, and they were usually located in the areas where music was performed. In London's publishing offices for the great part were concentrated on two streets of the West End: Charing Cross Road and Tin Pan Alley, the old name of what is today Denmark Street. In Paris they were located in the areas of Montmartre and its neighbouring areas. As in the case of music shops, publishers advertised their activity in music journals. The advertisements often emphasised success, saying that the companies promoted successful tunes. For instance, the company "Rex," located in Montmartre in Paris, in its advertisement published in *Jazz-Tango* in June 1935 addressed bandleaders and musicians saying that they should add successful tunes published by the company to their repertoire of the upcoming summer season. It is worth noting that the list of tunes presented in the advertisement included different genres of music such as fox-trot, rumbas and beguines, tangos and paso dobles.

[22] Jackson, 51–52.

ÉDITION REX

33, RUE DE NAVARIN

PARIS

Un choix de succès indispensables à votre répertoire pour la saison d'été

FOX-TROT

MON CŒUR RESTE PRES DE TOI, fox-mélodie de MAX ELLOY et EMILE STERN, arr. de TOM WALTHAM.
LA PETITE GARE, fox-trot gai de MAX ELLOY et EMIL STERN, arr. de R. WRASKOFF.
BARBE-BLEUE, fox-trot gai, arr. de TOM WALTHAM de Michel EMER.
C'EST UNE ESCALE, blues de R. GARRIGUENC.
POUR UN BAISER, fox mélodie de Max ELLOY et EMIL STERN, arr. de R. LEGRAND.
LA FANFARE DE MENILMONTANT, fox-trot gai de R. WRASKOFF.

RUMBAS ET BIGUINES

CUBAN MELODY, rumba mélodique de Louis RICHARDET.
HORAS LEJENAS, rumba mélodie de Oscar CALLE.
VENISE, rumba caractéristique de Emil STERN et Wal BERG, arr. de O. CALLE.
DOUDOU BIGUINE, de Michel EMER.

TANGOS CHANTES

MON CŒUR A RENCONTRE TON CŒUR, de Michel EMER.
J'EUS D'AUTRES AMOURS, de J. MORDREZ.
JE NE VEUX PAS T'AIMER, de A. BURLI.
MARIONNETTE, de J. ALFARO et J. COLOMBO.
RIEN QUE TOI, de René PESENTI.
VIENS, de T. HENRIOTTI.
TES BRAS, de L. LINAS.
EMPORTE-MOI, de Mario MELFI et R. LEFEBVRE.

PASO DOBLE, 6/8, etc.

MARAVILLA, paso doble de ALBERRO.
LA FILLE DE MADELON, 6/8 de Tom WALTHAM.

LE REPERTOIRE « REX »
LE REPERTOIRE QUI S'IMPOSE

Jazz-Tango Dancing VI, No.57 (Juin 1935): 31
BnF, Paris

The emphasis on success is well exemplified by an advertisement published in the *Melody Maker* in 1930 by the publishing company "Cecil Lennox" which had its office in Charing Cross Road. The company made a creative advertisement that pointed at its ability to make songs successful.

Melody Maker V, No.50 (February 1930): 99
BL, London.

The image chosen for the advertisement represented a stair with the titles of various songs published by the company written on each step. On the last step stood a circle with the word success written inside it twice, and on the left, the "signpost of success" signalled a new comedy hit.

Publishing companies could also acquire the rights to publish catalogues of other companies and in several cases this element was emphasised in the advertisements. For instance, the company "France-Melodie" in 1935 published an advertisement in *Jazz-Tango* which publicised the fact that in that year the company had obtained the exclusivity of the catalogue of the American company "Robbins Music," and addressed bandleaders specifically, inviting them to write to them to profit from this acquisition.

Jazz-Tango Dancing VI, No.60 (Octobre 1935): 5
BnF, Paris

Music publishers' offices were important spaces in the music scenes. In the offices there was a lot of coming and going of singers, agents, composers. These connections were fundamental for the publisher to have their songs played. Stanley Jackson gave an insight of the lively atmosphere one could feel in the office of publisher Stan Bradbury:

> A well-known crooner come in "just to say hello and see what's cooking." Stan, an ace plugger, goes misty-eyed as he picks up a sheet of music. […] Dance band leaders, musicians, arrangers, composers, agents…Everyone knows everyone else. Cigars and boloney are exchanged at high speed. Stan wants his tunes played or sung; that's his business and he knows it inside out, but it's a tough game. An agent who is handling a very famous singing star saunters in and talks about everything except what he is there for. They talk in superlatives and flash newspaper clippings. […] The father of a new starlet puts his head in the doorway and hands out more cigars. He was "just passing" and thought he's look in. Like others, he is prowling about Tin Pan Alley nosing out to-morrow's hit tunes. The piano is alive with love, nostalgia, hearthache, reunion, gipsy passion, rumba… […] The agent puts on his hat. Stan recalls their old, beautiful friendship which will be

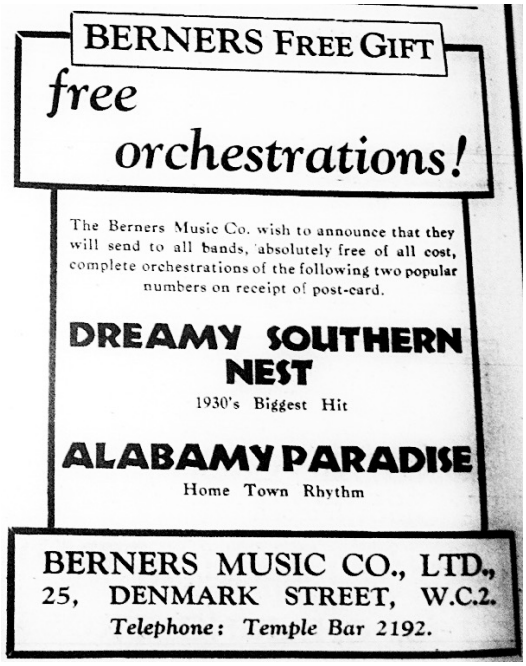
> ruined if the star doesn't sing his song in the next broadcast. The agent looks pained and helpless as he chews his cigar. "Give me a cover and I'll let her sing it" he concedes. In other words, he wants his star's picture on the cover of the song sheet. "It's gone to the printer," says Stan, and the eyes behind his lenses are stricken with misery. They argue, plead, cajole. The phone explodes. The gramophone company wants to fix a recording of the newest tune. And so it goes on…A lunatic asylum with a hard basis of sanity.[23]

With the spread of big bands in the first decades of the twentieth century, the role of arrangers became increasingly important because the employment of more instruments required the pieces of music to be adapted to all of them. The work of arrangers was important because it provided distinctive treatments of songs. An article that appeared in the *Melody Maker* in 1931 underlined the fundamental role played by arrangers:

> Musical arrangers attached to the big bands are smiling on swelling pay-rolls. Their worth is at last being recognised in terms of gold: their years of work in comparative obscurity are nearly over. No one in the dance-band world deserves success more than the arranger. He is a blessing to his band and to music publishers. He can "make" them both. Give him a poor tune and he'll make it into a success if there is the slightest talent in it. He takes the heart out of mediocre melodies, mangles it, twists, rends, butchers – and produces a number worth hearing. He knows the best qualities of the men in his band. He plays up to them. He gives the soloists chances to shine.[24]

Publishing companies employed arrangers and orchestrators to produce commercial stock arrangements which were then offered to bandleaders and musicians. In this case too, the advertisements were part of the actions that companies took to promote themselves. For instance, in 1930 to attract clients, "Berners Music" - one of the London publishing companies located in Denmark Street - offered the orchestrations of two songs to bands which subscribed to their catalogue through an advertisement in the *Melody Maker*:

[23] Jackson, 53–54.
[24] Leonard O. Mosley, "Arrangers Come Into Their Own", *Melody Maker* VI, n. 68 (August 1931): 645



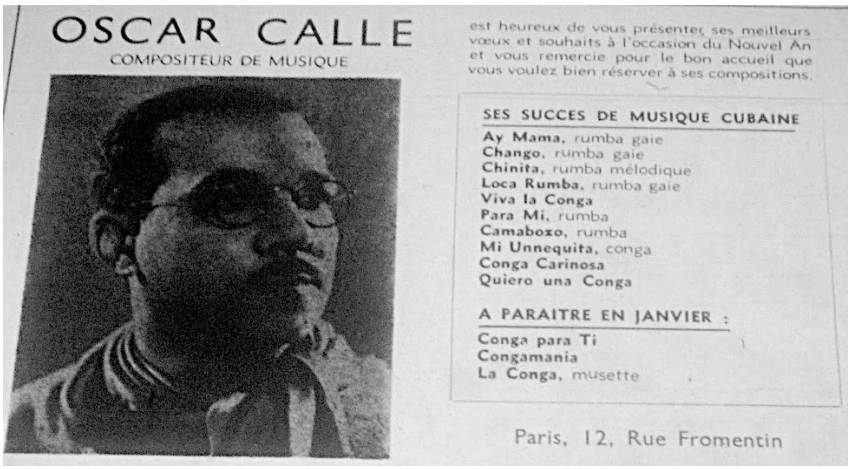
Melody Maker V, No.51 (March 1930): 276
BL, London.

Arrangers could be employed by leading publishers to work for a particular artist or band because the vocalists did not know the music. This was also the case of the bandleader Grégor who asked the pianist Stéphane Mougin to write arrangements for his band, an example of a common practice related to specifically commissioned arrangements. Indeed, managers or bandleaders could directly contact the arranger and commission a piece. For instance, Spike Hughes worked a lot as arranger and orchestrator. He recalled that at the beginning of his career, when he aimed to make a name for himself in the world of music, he had approached music publishers in Charing Cross Road, presenting himself as a professional musician, which gave him a better chance to secure employment.[25] In 1929 he was asked to arrange a Cole Porter tune for a band playing in a London hotel, which he believed not to be a good debut, but his arrangements were heard by a drummer working in a hotel in Piccadilly who asked him to work regularly as orchestrator for his band.[26]

In some cases, composers published their own advertisements in journals, as the Cuban bandleader Oscar Calle did in 1938. He published an advertisement in *L'Orchestre Jazz-Tango*,

[25] Hughes, *Second Movement*, 17.
[26] Hughes, 19–26.

in which he presented his most successful tunes that were Cuban songs, particularly *rumbas* and *congas*.



L'Orchestre Jazz-Tango IX, No.84 (Janvier 1938): 5
BnF, Paris

In the advertisement, Calle introduced himself simply as a music composer, and the caption on the right corner said that at new year he presented his compositions and wanted to thank all those who would appreciate them.

In general, for composers it was not easy to find a publishing company willing to publish their compositions. An article appeared in the *Melody Maker* in 1936 that addressed this issue, telling the story of a songwriter who encountered difficulties in getting his compositions published. The journalist who wrote the article had invited a songwriter and friend of his to London to let publishers listen to his compositions. The journalist and the songwriter proposed the composition in publishing offices for a week, during which the songwriter received positive feedback, but this was not enough for his songs to be published:

> Famous specialists listened to and admired the syncopated creations […] they acclaim him as brilliantly original. He was welcomed by every publisher of popular music in the metropolis. He had the stuff. He had the knack of creating the popular song – high-grade work. The publishers were charming – all of them. "Lovely: please leave it with us – we may be able to place it." That was three years ago. I need hardly add that not a note was published. It's a sad story – and there is no silver lining.

Three years later, with the support of well-known people working in the London music scene, the two musicians reattempted locating a publishing house willing to publish their songs. They spent another week around Tin Pan Alley, but they were again unsuccessful:

> My friend's art had developed a hundredfold, and, with reinforced ambition, we ventured again. […] So we spent another expensive and laborious week in Tin Pan Alley. Quite fruitless – my friend's songs have all wheedled their way back to their native haunts.

This difficulty was seen to be common among British composers who tried to have their works published in London. Indeed, the final comment in the article pointed to the fact that this difficulty affected British composers in general. However, even if it implied that publishing companies preferred foreign composers, the article envisaged a different future that would hopefully come true because of the expansion of the music publishing activities in Britain:

> The British publishing business is a problem for most of us. But it is encouraging and a little hopeful to note that it is expanding rapidly, and with so many new houses opening up, there may yet come a time when British composers will be able to decline the privilege of a place "On the Shelf."[27]

Once a piece of music was published by a publishing company another important figure in the music scene played his role: the "plugger." The plugger needed to persuade the largest number of bandleaders and singers to play or sing the tune that he was promoting, which normally lasted three months as a top tune. To achieve his goal, the plugger often went to music-halls and theatres trying to convince them to add the tune to their repertoires.

It was not uncommon that radio stars and bandleaders accepted money for playing tunes - the so-called "plug money" - even if their contracts explicitly forbade it. Indeed, song publishers devoted part of their financial resources to the promotion of tunes and to give gifts to

[27] "The Sad Story of a Songwriter who tried to force reluctant fame," *Melody Maker* XII, no. 186 (12 December 1936): 7.

bandleaders and singers. Bandleaders contacted managers of publishing firms in order to collect this kind of money, too. Hughes recalled that he tried to do this when his band made its debut on the radio with their broadcasts from Hilversum in Holland: "I knew that handsome sums were paid out in this way to plug tunes on the BBC's wavelengths, and I didn't see why a should not collect a little for playing tunes from Hilversum. The publicity value of Hilversum, however, appeared to be rather meagre, and I came away from London's Tin Pan Alley without a trace of 'sugar.' Since then I have resolutely refused to have anything to do with plug money in any form."[28]

In February 1929, an internal document written by the Outside Broadcast director of the BBC and addressed to regional directors and stations directors, noticed that a many dance-band leaders had become involved in song-plugging in outside broadcasts from theatres or clubs. The director listed the arrangements that had to be introduced to eliminate that practice such as the removal of the announcing microphone, thus preventing leaders from telling the audience what songs they had played and forbidding singing during broadcasts.[29] Still, the practice of song-plugging continued in the following years. A document written by the Secretariat in May 1940 drew attention to the issue. A certain amount of song-plugging, "the repeated playing of selected tunes in order to popularise them," was legitimate. The problem came when underground ways of securing song-plugging by interested parties occured, often in the form of money offered by publishers to dance band leaders to play plug numbers. Though the BBC had tried to stop this practice it had not succeeded, especially because it was difficult to find evidence and take actions against bandleaders who accepted plug money.[30]

In both London and Paris, there were specific organisations that reunited people working as composers and publishers. These associations had a history that dated back to the nineteenth century, as was the case of the British Music Publisher Association (MPA) founded in 1881 in London with its offices in the West End,[31] and the Société Civile des Auteurs, Compositeurs et Éditeurs de Musique (SACEM) founded three decades before, in 1851. The organisation was located in rue Chaptal, in the 9ème arrondissement close to place Pigalle. As declared in the statute of the SACEM, the purpose of the association was mainly linked to the collection of rights of execution of its members' music in France, in the colonial territories and in foreign

[28] Hughes, *Second Movement*, 87.
[29] BBC WAC/R19/244
[30] BBC WAC/R41/113/1
[31] 'History of the MPA', accessed 18 September 2016, http://www.mpaonline.org.uk/History-of-Music-Publishing.

countries, and to the protection of the material interests of its members. The society did not restrict the membership depending on national origins, as its members could be French or foreigners.[32] In several cases, people became members of the association because of some kind of dispute regarding rights, as happened to Ernest Léardée. After having discovered that one of his tunes had been used by another musician, he turned to SACEM. The association denied his claim to compensation because his tune had already been published by one of the main Parisian publishing firms, and he was not a member of SACEM. Thus, Léardée found it necessary to join the organisation. He completed the standard procedure for being admitted, which included the presentation of six original tunes published and commercialised, and became a member of SACEM in 1949.[33] This episode and the fact that he had difficulties in finding publishers for his tunes, gave him the idea of becoming a publisher himself. Beginning in 1950 he made his debut publishing several of his own songs with the caption "Publications Ernest Léardée," and in 1954 he asked for the inscription on the *registre du commerce* under the name Éditions Ernest Léardée.[34] Immediately afterwards he applied to SACEM to be registered as publisher also.[35]

It is worth noting that the police made reports about the association's meetings, a fact that shows a certain degree of monitoring activity of the state.[36] Furthermore, it regulated the solution of disputes that took place between the organisation and other actors in the musical scene. For instance, a Parisian police report investigated the case of a civil litigation between SACEM and the manager of a cabaret in Montmartre started in 1952. The association accused him of having hosted the performance of musical pieces without SACEM's authorisation, and took the matter to court. The manager was condemned to pay a fine, though the amount was reduced on appeal after he had declared that, as his request of authorisation to SACEM had been under negotiation, he thought he could make his orchestra perform those pieces.[37]

[32] APP GA 279/7599/1
[33] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 241–43.
[34] AP D34U3 2934
[35] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 243.
[36] APP GA 279/7599/7. Report of the metropolitan police dated 4 February 1946.
[37] APP GA 279/7599/18

A fundamental activity in the network of cooperation to produce a work of music is recording, because it makes the music available to the public and able to circulate transcending the spatial dimension of the live performance. This activity is carried out in specific places: studios where various professional figures worked, including sound engineers and record producers. Since their invention, records became increasingly important in the music business, hence the activity of producing them acquired an increasing significance in the cooperative network and recording companies carried out this activity.

In the final years of the nineteenth century, with the technological development of the phonograph, recording companies began to be established.[38] For example, the Gramophone Company and the parent organisation His Master's Voice in Britain, and the French Pathé in France. The latter was created by two brothers that established a phonograph factory in Paris in 1894, and in 1896 they created the first recording studios. The company operated in a sort of monopoly until the 1920s when the French recording industry developed.[39] In the 1920s and 1930s the recording market was alive with new companies that emerged such as Decca, founded in 1929 in London, which had its studios in Chelsea. In the advertisements that the company published for promoting its records, Decca put the emphasis on the fact that the company was British with the sentence "British and Best" written in between the Union Flag.

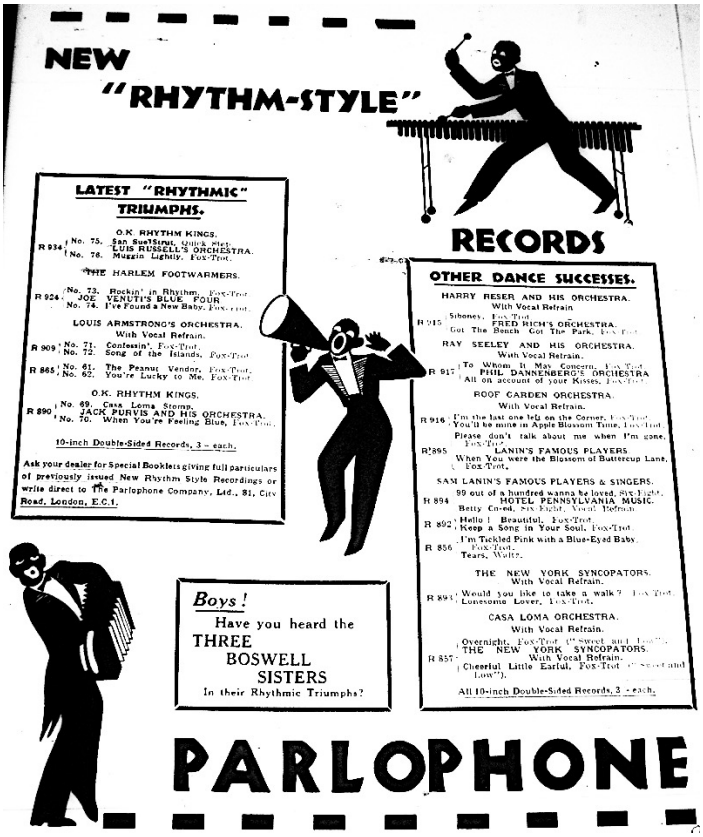
[38] Several works have paid attention to the history of recording industries, such as Pekka Gronow and Ilpo Saunio, *International History of the Recording Industry* (London and New York: Cassell, 1998); Sophie Maisonneuve, *L'invention du disque 1877-1949: genèse de l'usage des médias musicaux contemporains* (Paris: Archives contemporaines, 2009); Lee Marshall, ed., *The International Recording Industries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013); Damon J. Phillips, *Shaping Jazz: Cities, Labels, and the Global Emergence of an Art Form* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2013). Scholars have also investigated the history of recording industries in specific places, for instance William Howland Kenney, *Recorded Music in American Life: The Phonograph and Popular Memory, 1890-1945* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 1999); Tim Gracyk, *Popular American Recording Pioneers: 1895-1925*, Binghamton (London and New York: Hawroth, 2000); Peter Martland, *Recording History: The British Record Industry, 1888 – 1931* (Plymouth: Scarecrow Press, 2013).

[39] On the development of the Pathé label see Ludovic Tournès, 'Jalons Pour Une Histoire Internationale de l'industrie Du Disque: Expansion, Déclin et Absorption de La Branche Phonographique de Pathé (1898-1936)', in *Histoire Des Industries Culturelles En France, XIXe-XXe Siècles* (Paris: ADHE, 2002), 465–77; Hugh Dauncey and Philippe Le Guern, 'France', in *The International Recording Industries* (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 134–35.

Melody Maker VI, n. 67 (July 1931): 582
BL, London.

The expansion of the dance music market influenced companies to promote their catalogues focused on these genres of music. For instance, beginning in the late 1920s the label Parlophone made advertisements which promoted what they called the new "rhythm-style."[40] In these advertisements, the company used illustrated figures of three black players with accentuated white lips, which was an emphasis on physical aspects commonly found in caricatures of black people of the period. An example of these advertisements was published in the *Melody Maker* in 1931.

[40] Palophone was the former British branch of the German company Parlophon, formed in 1923 and then acquired by the Columbia Gramophone Company,



Melody Maker VI, No.66 (June 1931): 490
BL, London

Apart from big companies, several independent recording companies were founded in the following years. The founders usually wanted to record specific genres of music and particular musicians, who were not included in catalogues or not in a large number. For instance, Ernest Léardée recorded his first beguine with his band of the Bal Blomet with the company INOVAT in 1930 in a small shop close to Place d'Italie which was transformed into a studio. Later that same year, these first recordings enabled him to sign a contract with the publishing company Salabert that had just created its own recording label. It is worth noting that before offering the contract, Francis Salabert went to the Bal Blomet to see the band.

The activity of the founders and managers of the labels was crucial, especially for the spread of black genres of music. In various cases the technical support of the big companies was indispensable for independent labels, as in the case of the French label Swing in Paris.

The leaders of the Hot Club de France, Charles Delaunay founded the record label Swing in November 1937 with the intention of making the club capable of producing its own recordings.[41] The partnership with the French Pathé-Marconi was crucial, for the company

[41] BnF, AUD, fonds Charles Delaunay, Boîte no. 1, Greffe du Tribunal de Commerce de la Seine No. 317.700, 26 November 1937.

would deal with the technical necessities. Delaunay contacted Jean Bérard, the Pathé-Marconi's label director, and suggest the idea of the creation of a jazz section to produce recordings and license American releases for France, to which Bérard agreed. The agreement established that Pathé-Marconi would supply the financial support that allowed the record production, the provision of recording studios, engineers, record-pressing and distribution. Delaunay and the Hot Club de France would select musicians and repertoire. Swing was the first record label devoted solely to jazz. Delaunay was the owner and Hughes Panaissé the artistic director whose connections were crucial in the first years, enabling the label to engage with musicians and license American releases.

Delaunay explained that the main reason that made him pursue the project was connected to the artistic idea of producing records of a genre of music that major recording labels overlooked. However, this choice, based on past experiences, was also made in consideration of a conscious economic calculation that there was a market for this kind of music:

> L'indifférence que témoignaient les marques de disques à l'égard de la musique du jazz nous avait incite depuis longtemps à créer une marque de disques spécialisée dans cette musique. Nous savions pour l'expérience Ultraphone et par la vente des disques des Quintette que, sans dépasser des chiffres considérables, les disques de ce genre se vendraient suffisamment pour rendre viable une telle entreprise.[42]

The first release was a recording that took place in April 1937 and that featured the American saxophonist Coleman Hawkins. Hawkins played alongside with the American Benny Carter and the French saxophone players André Ekyan and Alix Combelle on the front with him, and Django Reinhardt on guitar, Stéphane Mougin on piano, Eugene d'Hellemes on bass and the American drummer Tommy Benford backing them. Delaunay chose what he thought were the best versions of the tracks and Swing made its first release.[43] As historian Jeffrey Jackson underlines, the choice of musicians recruitment showed the purpose of aligning American and French musicians to the same level.[44]

[42] BnF, AUD, fonds Charles Delaunay, Boîte no. 1, "La création de la marque Swing," 1948
[43] Michael Dregni, *Django: The Life and Music of a Gypsy Legend* (Oxford University Press, 2006), 124–25.
[44] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 185.

The company made a name with this first release, which would become the label's best seller. Therefore, for the second release Delaunay decided to record Django Reinhardt and the Quintette du Hot Club de France. It is worth noting that the input for the recording came from Britain. Having seen the success of Decca's licensed recordings of the Quintette in Britain, the British part of Gramophone company had asked Jean Bérard to produce recordings of the band. The recordings would be released on British Gramophone and on His Master's Voice. Thus, Bérard turned to Delaunay to organise the session which took place in April 1937. The British company had provided Bérard with a list of songs to be recorded, a fact that Pannassié opposed as an annoying habit of record companies that forced musicians to interpret pieces that they did not like. Reinhardt was disappointed too, because the band had elaborated on more original compositions. Eventually a compromise was found with the company, and Reinhardt replaced the tunes he did not like with others upon Delaunay's approval. As Michael Dregni underlines "Gramophone/HMV channels of distribution throughout Europe would be crucial for the success of Reinhardt and the Quintette in the following years.[45] Out of these recording sessions Delaunay saved two selected tracks for the second release of Swing.

In 1938 the work for the label took Panassié to New York where he recorded several sessions with American musicians. In general, Swing managed to expand its business in a significant way. As Jacques Chesnel has reported, over one hundred records were recorded before 1942 by the label and the number continued to increase until the end of the Second World War.[46]

As we have seen in the case of Delaunay and Panassié, record producers played a crucial role in the cooperative network which contributed to the spread of black genres of music. They found musicians to record and followed them during recording sessions. In Britain, Denis Preston, a journalist who eventually became an important record producer, made a fundamental contribution for the promotion of Caribbean music after the Second World War. In the initial part of his career he obtained the support of the managers of the label EMI-Parlophone to produce Trinidadian calypso music, and the first recording sessions took place in January 1950 at EMI's Abbey Road studios, in North-West London. In the following years, Preston played a crucial role as producer for Caribbean musicians, but he also produced jazz music. Furthermore, in 1958 he opened a recording studio, and was the first independent jazz producer in Europe to work in his own establishment.

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[45] Dregni, *Django*, 125–26.

[46] Jacques Chesnel, *Le jazz en quarantaine: 1940-1946: occupation/libération* (Cherbourg: Isoète, 1994); cited in Matthew F. Jordan, *Le Jazz: Jazz and French Cultural Identity* (Urbana, Chicago, and Springfield: University of Illinois Press, 2010), 281.

It is worth noting that the increasing importance of records also created a market for studios that was independent from companies, and was directed to musicians. Studios made use of journals in order to promote their work. Evidence of this is shown in an advertisement that a West End studio published in the *Melody Maker* in May 1932. The advertisement invited musicians to record their performances pointing to the importance for musicians to listen to his own sounds.

Melody Maker VII, No.75, (May 1932): 568
BL, London.

In addition, in this period technological developments made new instruments available including tools to make home recording. The company "Cairns & Morrison" published an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* in 1930, which promoted an electrical accessory that

attached to the gramophone in order to make records, not only of radio programmes but also of personal music with a microphone the company supplied.

Melody Maker VI, n. 67 (July 1931): 582
BL, London.

This equipment and the way it was presented, as the cheerful title in the advertisement expressed, testifies to the spread of records throughout British houses. In addition, in journals, specific articles concerning home recording and newly-created instruments appeared. For instance, in the *Melody Maker* the journalist Edgar Jackson wrote a series of articles in which he introduced new models of recording equipment, explaining how they worked and the differences between models.[47]

[47] Edgar Jackson, "All About Home Recording," *Melody Maker* XIII, n. 202 (3 April 1937): 12

With the diffusion of music as a leisure activity an increasing number of nightclubs animated the urban scenes of Paris and London. Opening a club and making it successful was a crucial activity in the network of cooperation in the music scenes, because it allowed people to discover and listen to the music.

In some cases, club owners had a long experience of running clubs; an activity which they had carried out in more than one place. Among these was the American Joe Zelli. Born in Chicago as Giuseppe Salvatore Zelli, he had started out as a barkeeper in Chicago, then had run his own clubs in New York and London, before opening a club in France in 1917 in the city of Tours. The success that the place obtained among American officers gave him the chance to move to Paris where he opened a new club. He was able to obtain the license that allowed him to keep the club open after midnight, thus achieving an advantage over other clubs, as the Parisian law did not permit it. Profiting from providing clients a warm location where they could drink, listen to music, and dance when other clubs were closed, Zelli's became one of the most popular Montmartre nightspots in the 1920s.[48]

In various cases, thanks to the proximity between Paris and London, several people worked in entertainment in both cities. An example of this is the manager of the Caribbean Club in London, Rudi Evans. Stanley Jackson in his *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho* (1946) gives a description of his life.

> Rudi is a deep-chested, thoughtful negro who got his licence because the authorities sympathised with his idea of catering for the intellectuals and entertainers of the coloured race. Born in Panama, he is of French colonial extraction and studied languages at the Sorbonne. He taught singing on the Continent, acted in France and Belgium and has played with Robeson and other stars. More recently he has done film work over here. […] He talks philosophy as he checks the bottles that are leaving the big steel safe on their way to the bar. Hundreds of his members, black and white, come to him for advice. No father confessor could be kinder yet more dispassionate than this middle-aged club proprietor who keeps a dozen human volcanoes quiet with a glance and a wave of the hand.[49]

[48] "Report Joe Zelli Dead; Famed for His Bar in Paris," *Chicago Daily Tribune*, January 9, 1931; Craig Lloyd, *Eugene Bullard, Black Expatriate in Jazz-Age Paris* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2006), 77–79.
[49] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 107–8.

Evans was married to a Danish woman, and ran the club with specific ideas: he did not allow drums because he said they meant trouble in a club like his.

Jackson recalled another example of a club owner who had experience of operating in both cities. Joslin Augustus Bingham, better known as 'Frisco, was an entertainer in Paris where he also had a successful nightclub in Montmartre. In London he opened the International Bar, initially in Soho and later relocated in Mayfair. His previous activity in France was occasionally recalled by clients who frequented his bar, as in the case of a Frenchman who introduced him to his wife as "the man with the gayest club in the whole Paris."[50] If Evans was rarely to be seen in the dance-room or at the bar, Bingham used to drink with clients and make jokes with them in his bar.

Another case that exemplifies this mobility between the two cities is Kate Meyrick. She was a London club hostess and the owner of the 43 Club located in Soho from 1924 to 1933. The club became renowned in the 1920s for parties frequented by rich and prominent people and was also a place where criminal offences took place.

She went to prison on various occasions charged with irregularities of the club, in particular the illegal sale of liquors, and bribery.[51] What is usually not told about her is that for a short period of time she went to Paris and opened a club there. In her memoirs, published in 1933, she recalled that time and compared the experiences of being a club owner in the two cities.

From what she had seen during her visits to Paris before moving there in June 1925, the city seemed to be the perfect place to open a club. Once she arrived in Paris, she started looking for premises in Montmartre, discovering to her surprise that the clubs there tended to be small:

> I started full of hope to find suitable premises, everyone was talking of the wonderful night life of Montmartre and of the fortunes which Zelli and the other cabaret proprietors were amassing. But when I had looked over a few places the agents showed me my high spirits suffered a temporary check. Most of the premises I saw were little better than cocktail bars with a minute dance-floor attached.[52]

[50] Jackson, 109.
[51] TNA MEPO 2/4481.
[52] Kate Meyrick, *Secrets of the 43 Club* (Dublin: Parkgate Publications, 1994), 119.

Eventually Meyrick found a big place that in the following months was crowded with a large number of English students, wealthy foreigners and also Parisian dwellers. Her ideas about the type of club to be opened before she had arrived in Paris turned out to be wrong:

> I had arrived in Paris with the idea that we ought to be as French as possible – French band, French waiters, French drinks, French girls. But I quickly found out that this was a serious mistake. The English and American visitors demanded the drinks of their own countries and the two English dancing hostesses who had followed me over were far more successful than any of our pretty French girls.[53]

The case of Meyrick illustrates how owners of clubs needed to adapt to different contexts in which they operated. She was able to make the changes that were essential for the club to be successful in the Parisian nightlife. Moreover, her familiarity with the London scene allowed her to compare the two contexts, in particular she underlined several aspects of the nightlife in Paris that made it shocking, including frequent fights and the presence of black people in clubs of low level:

> My stay in Paris afforded me a vast experience of underworld tragedy as well as of the gay city's brighter aspects. At gambling parties in Montmartre and down the Seine, for example, fights are much more frequent than they are in the lowest haunts of London […]. The negro element in Paris, moreover, adds to the horrors of such places, for the negroes are inveterate gamblers, and their gambling more often than not leads to bloodshed. Another aspect of Parisian night life which cannot fail to be repugnant to English people is the extent of the association of white girls with men of colour.[54]

[53] Meyrick, 121.
[54] Meyrick, 126–27.

Nevertheless, her experience in Paris lasted only a few months: at the end of 1925 she went back to London, but only after having sold her Parisian club at almost double the price she had paid.

The success of nightclubs in various instances was linked to the activity of the manager of the club, who was another important figure in the music scenes. For example, Zelli's became one of the most fashionable clubs in Paris in great part thanks to the role played by the African American Eugene Bullard; a case that also shows the high degree of fluidity in the entertainment circuit. Bullard had fled Georgia and had arrived in Glasgow in 1912. At first he became a boxer and spent one year in England before settling in Paris in 1914. He volunteered for the French Foreign Legion during the First World War, and at the end of the conflict he became a drummer and artistic director of Montmartre club. Bullard was the man who managed to let Joe Zelli obtain the all-night opening license through his personal connections. Indeed, Bullard contacted Robert Henri, a distinguished lawyer that he had met during the war, who intervened in favour of Zelli.

Bullard's case is one of the instances which reflects how frequently roles in the music scenes overlapped. First he became a drummer, then the manager of some of the most important Montmartre clubs in the 1920s, such as Zelli's and Le Grand Duc, and in the early 1930s he opened his own American-style bar and a gymnasium where he trained prominent Parisians.[55] Bullard was a central figure in the Parisian music scene as club manager and agent for American musicians. Indeed, he was a reference point for the American expatriate community in Paris thanks to his fluency in French and his connections in the city. The great African American clarinettist Sidney Bechet described Bullard's reputation in Paris in this way:

> Gene was a real man about Paris: he had a way. […] If someone needed help, he did more than any Salvation Army could do with a whole army […]. He'd made of himself the kind of man people around Paris had a need for. The cabarets, the clubs, the musicianers – when there was some trouble they couldn't straighten put by themselves, they called on Gene. He was a man you could count on.[56]

[55] On Bullard see the biography written by Lloyd, *Eugene Bullard*.
[56] Bechet, *Treat It Gentle*, 153. Bullard helped Bechet on the occasion of Bechet trial for a fight with other musicians which eventually caused the death of one woman.

Bullard was also the man behind the arrival of the woman who would become another central figure in interwar Paris: Ada Smith, known as Bricktop. In 1924 Bullard had to replace the singer in his club, and gave Sammy Richardson – an African American saxophonist who used to go to New York quite regularly to buy records and bring them to Europe – the task of recruiting Bricktop. At the time, she was performing as a singer in various New York clubs. She agreed to go to Paris, and started her career in Montmartre as a singer, but soon the entertainment scene in Paris allowed her to assume other roles.

Initially, when Bricktop arrived in Paris she was shocked by the difference she found in the Parisian music scene in Montmartre compared to what she was accustomed to in New York. On the day of her arrival when Bullard showed her Le Grand Duc, the club where she was supposed to perform, she was shocked, as she recalled in her autobiography:

> "But it can't be. Do you mean you say this is the whole place? Have I come to Paris to entertain in a bar about the size of a booth at Connie's Inn? I had a twelve-piece band backing me up in New York." I might have gone on and said something I would have regretted later if a handsome young Negro busboy hadn't come out of the kitchen just then. He smiled and said, "You need something to eat." He took me by the arm and led me back to the kitchen and gave me some food. He said I would like Paris and the Grand Duc.

The young man that offered her food and support was Langston Hughes, who was to become one of the main exponents of the Harlem Renaissance, and who was working in the club as a dishwasher.

After her initial difficult weeks in Paris, Bricktop became accustomed to the Paris music scene and performed as a singer in various clubs in Montmartre, and the opportunities that she found there allowed her to build her career as manager of club. In 1926 she opened her own club called Music Box – which closed down a few months later because it did not obtain a permanent license, – and in 1927 she was asked to become the owner of Le Grand Duc by the Jamersons, the French couple who owned it. After one year she decided to open a more elegant club, which she named after herself following Cole Porter's suggestion: Bricktop's became a fashionable place American musicians visited, and Bricktop became a central figure in

Monmartre.[57] In 1932, a few years after Bricktop's inauguration, the English singer with African American origins, Mabel Wadham, went to Paris and became an associate of Bricktop. Born in the Birmingham area and known as Mabel Mercer, before running the club she had been a member of the Southern Syncopated Orchestra, and singer in the chorus of various revues in London and Paris. The partnership between the two women lasted until the eve of the Second World War. The fear of war made Mabel Mercer flee from France in October 1938, and move to New York.[58]

The cases of Bricktop and Meyrick are not isolated. In fact, several women of different origins owned or ran clubs in both Paris and London. Among these was the French woman Aurélie Orus who, born in 1906 of Spanish parents in the department of the Basses-Pyrénées in the South-West of France, became the owner of the La Cabane Cubaine in 1947. The Martiniquais Eldège Fortuné had originally founded the club in 1932.[59]

Another woman whose life well exemplifies how the connections between the music scenes of the two cities could be very fluid was Adelaide Hall. A jazz and cabaret singer from New York, Adelaide Hall enjoyed fame through her performances in theatrical and musical shows, such as *Shuffle Along* (1921), the first musical created by African Americans, and in the clubs of Harlem, and through her collaboration with Duke Ellington. In 1924 she married Bertram Hicks, a merchant seaman born in Trinidad and educated in England who became her manager. In 1935 they moved to Paris where Hall performed in various cabarets. In December 1937 the liveliness of the Paris entertainment scene encouraged the couple to open a club, called La Grosse Pomme, which regularly hosted one of the most important French bands of those years, the Quintette du Hot Club de France with the Gypsy guitarist Django Reinhardt and the violinist Stéphane Grappelli. However, another working opportunity made Hall move again. Only one year after opening of La Grosse Pomme, Hall was offered a part in the cast of a theatre show in London and she accepted. Thus, the couple closed the Parisian club and settled in London, where in 1938 they took over an elegant nightclub in Mayfair, called the Florida Club, a fact that shows how easy it was to make business as a club owner in the music scenes. Hall became popular in Britain through recordings and broadcasts for the BBC, which on some occasions used the club as a location for broadcasting. In 1941 the Florida Club was destroyed during the

[57] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 81–88; 119–22.
[58] James Haskins, *Mabel Mercer: A Life* (New York: Atheneum, 1987).
[59] AN 19930049/4/2164 447 Cabane Cubaine. Mme Orus, Aurélie.

German bombing of London. After the war the couple decided to try again and in 1951 they opened another club in the West End of London, called Calypso.[60]

These cases demonstrate that not only did celebrities open nightclubs – such as the great African American performer Josephine Baker, who opened her club Chez Josephine in Paris in 1926 – but different people engaged in the management of club, and that also women played an important part in this sense. In particular, several musicians during their careers had the opportunity and the possibility of becoming club owners or managers. This happened both in Paris and London, and involved musicians regardless of their origin. Indeed, in some cases they were English or French, whilst in others they came from outside national borders, and had spent brief or long periods of time working in the music scenes of the two cities. For example, Alexandre Stellio opened the club Tagada Biguine immediately after the end of the Colonial Exposition in 1931, and after only a few years of activity in Paris.

It is also noteworthy that if musicians did not always effectively become club owners, they nevertheless had the chance to do so, which shows the high degree of the fluidity of roles. For instance, Félix Valvert had the possibility of taking over the property of a club but he did not do so because he lacked the money to pay for the debts. He recalled that afterwards a friend of his remarked that he should have asked him for help and he would have provided the money.[61] Furthermore, in some cases musicians became owners of various activities, as we have seen in the case of Bullard who also opened a gymnasium. Another case was Edmundo Ros who in the years that followed the Second World War founded a dance school, a publishing and talent agency, and a photographic studio. In addition, in 1951 he took over the property of the Coconut Grove club in London, which he maintained until 1959.

[60] Iain Cameron Williams, *Underneath a Harlem Moon: The Harlem to Paris Years of Adelaide Hall* (London and New York: Continuum, 2002), 334–58.; Stephen Bourne, "Hall, Adelaide Louise Estelle (1901-1993)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2011), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/52095, accessed 21 September 2015.
[61] Valvert, *Félix Valvert*, 61.

Intermediary Figures: Musical Agents and Bandleaders

In between musicians and club owners and managers, intermediary figures operated. In particular musical agents and bandleaders played an essential role in the entertainment circuit. Their activity in the cooperative network in the music scenes was important because as intermediaries they found employment for bands and musicians in clubs and theatres.

Musical agents had the duty of discovering up-and-coming bands to be introduced onto the entertainment circuit, organising tours throughout the country, and negotiating engagements within clubs. The agencies had offices in the cities that were usually located in the same areas where music was played. For instance, in 1946 Stanley Jackson gave a portrait of the typical agents that one could find in Soho:

> Charing Cross Road is jammed with people who talk in high gear and think in low. In the agent's office you hear a very different tale. The agent is almost invariably Jewish, smart, dyspeptic, hairless. His office is crowded with acts anxious to be booked for the big circuits. He is always talking about the need for new talent, "something different," but it's the devil of a job to drag him out to a suburban hall to see a new act.[62]

Furthermore, they also had to deal with problems connected to the engagement of bands with the authorities. For instance, the employment of foreign bands in London, which increased with the arrival of black musicians during the 1920s, caused disputes between agents and officials of the Ministry of Labour, as the case of the Kit Kat Club in Haymarket in the West of London reveals.

Two reports dated 17th and 31st July 1925, by an official of the Ministry of Labour, observed that the employment of alien bands at the club seemed to last an indefinite period, and to become almost a permanent feature. This action, the official affirmed, tended to nullify the policy of admitting alien bands only for limited periods, and he also expressed concern that the Musicians' Union would strongly object.

[62] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 55.

Harry Foster, the agent who provided the engagements of American bands, justified his request in a letter to the Ministry (13th August 1925) by saying that the bands requested were highly specialised, "the best known and most prominent type in the United States", and were engaged "not only to play for dancing, but also to give entertainment in the club," in order to satisfy the demand for American music of the club members. In addition, he affirmed that the introduction of these bands in England had been a means to improve the quality of English bands. This affirmation by Foster exemplifies how the consideration of bands varied due to their reputation and their success, and also that their positive influence on British music was in some cases recognised.[63]

In a letter dated 5th September 1925, the Musicians' Union expressed its concern about the possibility that conditions of employment of foreign bands were abrogated or partially abandoned. For the union's members, the limitation of the employment of foreign musicians had produced beneficial results. It had created new employment opportunities for British musicians and they could develop their native talent "to such an extent that only a few very special American musicians are in any way superior to ours." In the union's view, the demand for American bands was to a large extent artificial, fostered by agents who were interested in extracting commissions.[64]

During the meeting between the management of the Kit Kat Club and officials of the Ministry of Labour which took place on 14th October 1925, the manager of the club maintained that the bands in question were not displacing British labour, as first class British musicians were not unemployed, and that the public preferred the music for dancing performed by American bands to that performed by British bands. Besides, the high cost of alien bands had resulted in an increase of the remuneration for British bands, for example the Kit Kat Club had engaged Jack Hylton's band at a considerable expense. The manager also protested against the fact that the club had not received the same concession as the Savoy Hotel, which had employed a Tango band without being forced to incorporate an equal number of British musicians. The protest notwithstanding, the Ministry did not approve the request and continued to provide permits in respect of approved bands for limited period of eight weeks as special attractions.[65]

As this example shows, musical agents played an important role in the entertainment scene, and their work allowed the employment of musicians in the clubs. In particular, they maintained

[63] TNA LAB 2/1188/AR278/42/25
[64] TNA LAB 2/1188/AR278/6/25
[65] TNA LAB 2/1188/278/42/25

contacts with musicians coming from outside the cities, and therefore their activity was crucial for the spread of music. However, it is possible to identify some more informal networks that brought musicians to play in both Paris and London. These informal networks could in some cases be created by bandleaders, who also played the role of intermediaries.

The guitarist Sid Colin in his memoirs *And the Bands Played On* (1977) described the role that bandleaders played as separate from ordinary musicians: "the bandleaders were a race apart, of a status equalled only by that other exotic breed, the *maitres d'hôtel*."[66] Furthermore, in many cases their contribution was not fundamental from a musical point of view. In several cases they were not musicians and they had a function linked to the building of relationships with the audience in the clubs during shows. In addition, they worked as intermediaries between agents or club owners and the band. However, in order to present a convincing front those bandleaders who were not able to play an instrument presented themselves as musicians. Colin recalled that this was common especially in the twenties and thirties. Still, he added that the relationships between bandleaders and the members of the band could be very different from one to the other depending on the personality of the bandleader. Interestingly, he depicted the relationship as a labour relationship between boss and worker:

> All the same it would be wrong to give the impression that the relationship between the bandleader and his band was never better than one of mutual distaste. Like many another boss-worker relationship it was a good deal more complex than that. Some bandleaders were fun to work for, some commanded respect, others were heartily loathed.[67]

It is worth underlining that the role of bandleaders became increasingly important over the years, and this testifies to the changes occurring in the music industry. Andrew Crisell has underlined this tendency regarding BBC theatre. In 1933 the company gave instructions to the producers of its dance programmes to negotiate agreements with bandleaders, no longer through theatre managers.[68]

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[66] Sid Colin, *And the Bands Played On* (London: Elm Tree Books, 1977), 24.
[67] Colin, 27.
[68] Andrew Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 32.

In Paris one important bandleader who built a network of musicians and in many instances launched their careers, was Grégor, a man of Armenian origins. Krikor Kelenian – this was his real name – had left Turkey in 1915 to escape the massacres of Armenians. Before becoming an influential bandleader, he had been a successful boxer, and then a dancer. Grégor played an important role in the Parisian music scene because he helped young musicians become involved with jazzy styles of music, giving them their first opportunities to perform. As Stéphane Grappelli recalled, Grégor recruited good musicians, like French players such as Philippe Brun, Léo Vauchant and Stéphane Mougin who were members of his orchestra Grégor et ses Grégoriens, which made its debut in 1927. The repertoire comprised well-known American songs of the time, on which the musicians of the band made their first improvisations. The orchestra was one of the first European big bands. On the model of American big band shows the performances included dancers, and gave relevance to costumes and scenery.[69] These kind of bandleaders could have a decisive influence on musicians' careers, as the case of Grappelli shows. Indeed, one night in 1929 when the orchestra was relaxing in a club, Grégor forced Grappelli to play the violin with the house band. Grappelli had entered the band earlier that year after the invitation of his friend Philippe Brun. The extemporaneous performance impressed Grégor to such an extent that he encouraged him to resume playing the violin, which Grappelli had abandoned in favour of the piano.

> Un soir que nous avons pris quelques verres, Grégor me demanda s'il était vrai que je jouais du violon. Avec autorité, il exigea du violoniste de la maisonμ qu'il me prêtât son instrument […] il insista tellement que, finalement, après un bon verre, je jouai un standard avec le groupe du Broadway, tous des copains. Grégor était enchanté. Je m'imaginais qu'il n'y penserait plus la nuit passée. C'était mal le connaître. Dès qu'il me vit, le lendemain, il me demanda de me débrouiller pour trouver un violon qu'il achèterait pour moi. […] Au concert suivant, Grégor me fit signe, et je descendis de mon perchoir pour jouer quelques chorus pendant les ballades et les valses lentes. Une semaine plus tard, j'abandonnais le piano pour le violon. […] J'ai une immense reconnaissance envers Grégor. Sans sa décision de me forcer à reprendre le violon, je n'en jouerais peut-être pas aujourd'hui. C'était mon destin, un verre au Broadway…[70]

[69] Jeffrey H. Jackson, *Making Jazz French: Music and Modern Life in Interwar Paris* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003), 128; Stépane Grappelli, *Mon Violon Pour Tout Bagage. Mémoires* (Paris: Calmann-Lévy, 1992), 57–59.
[70] Grappelli, *Mon Violon*, 60.

The band toured South America in the summer of 1930 playing in cinemas and theatres in Brazil and Argentina; demonstrating how musicians had the opportunity to directly enter into contact with Latin genres of music such as samba. Although the orchestra performed a variety of genres Grégor defined its style as a form of Latin jazz, and promoted the fact that French musicians performed it.[71]

Grégor's significant role in the Parisian musical scene was also linked to his founding of the music journal *La Revue du Jazz* in 1929, which was the first French journal entirely dedicated to jazz.

As we have seen before, on the occasion of big events and the high demand for musicians able to play particular genres of music, bandleaders recruited players directly from their area of origin. This is what happened when Alexandre Stellio had to form the orchestra that would play at the Colonial Exposition in Paris in 1931. Furthermore, the success of American big bands in the United States spread worldwide and inspired musicians in Europe to form bands, using them as models, as we have seen in the case of Grégor's band. In order to show this influence further, I will pay closer attention to another case: the formation of an all-coloured band in the London musical scene by Ken Johnson in the mid-1930s. This case exemplifies how, in order to create these bands, bandleaders were able to recruit musicians directly from their area of origin, through informal contacts and networks that they had previously established, thus playing a significant role in the music scenes of the cities.

A first attempt to create an all-coloured band, on the model of the bands that were successful on the other side of the Atlantic, had already been undertaken a few years before. In 1929 the Trinidadian pianist George Clapham recruited several musicians of Caribbean origin, among whom was the Jamaican Leslie Thompson on trumpet.[72] In addition, Clapham found two British musicians: Monty Tyree from the Manchester area, on saxophone, and the pianist Lily Jemmott, from Cardiff. Thompson recalled that the rehearsals and the efforts notwithstanding, they could

[71] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 128.

[72] George Clapham had arrived in Europe as a member of the Southern Syncopated Orchestra. For the band he recruited two other Trinidadians who had settled in London in the early 1920s: the guitarist Gerald "Al" Jennings (1896-1980) served the Royal Navy during WWI and settled in Britain after the war, and the drummer Gus Newton who had arrived in Britain as a seaman, and was a boarding house keeper in King's Cross. The saxophonist Joe Appleton who had arrived in London in the mid-1920s, was also in the band. John Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz: 2nd Edition* (London and New York: Continuum, 2004), 5; 194; Toynbee, Tackley, and Doffman, *Black British Jazz*, 37.

not find an engagement in the London club circuit, except as a replacement for a band that was on holiday for one week. Thompson depicted the attempt as an "ambitious failure," and ascribed the reason for it to the inadequate level of performance that the band was able to reach compared with that of the American big bands in fashion at the time.[73] Only in 1936 did an all-coloured band born in Britain obtain success on the London entertainment circuit; it was the band led by the Guinean dancer Ken "Snakehips" Johnson.

Ken Johnson arrived at Plymouth on 31st August 1929 aboard of the ship SS Nickerie travelling from the Caribbean to Amsterdam.[74] He was born fifteen years earlier in British Guiana, and his parents had sent him to England to study there. Instead of pursuing a medical career as his father wished, Johnson became a dancer and bandleader. He took dancing lessons from the African American choreographer Clarence "Buddy" Bradley, who had recently settled in England to work in C.B. Cochran's shows, and had opened a dance school in the West End of London. In 1934 Johnson journeyed to the Caribbean, visiting British Guiana and Trinidad where he appeared on stage accompanied by local musicians; he also went to New York and Hollywood in the United States.[75] The shows by American bands that he saw in Harlem inspired him to form his own swing band. Back in London, the partnership with the Jamaican trumpeter Leslie Thompson made this come true.

As Thompson recalled in his autobiography, the idea of forming a coloured swing band came around 1936. Thompson and Johnson had met a few years before in a West End club. At that time Thompson was active in the London music scene while Johnson was a student who had begun to spend time with American dancers. The two often met at various places of the area and became friends. After Johnson's journey to the United States, during which he had learned new dance steps,[76] they talked together about the idea of forming an all-coloured band. Given his experience in Clapham's similar project and his familiarity with American arrangements, Thompson agreed that it was a good idea. Johnson would be the dancer and dummy conductor, whilst Thompson would find the musicians, ready them to perform as a band and lead them.

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[73] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 64–66.

[74] TNA, BT 26/910/42.

[75] Val Wilmer, 'Johnson, Kenrick Reginald Hijmans (1914–1941)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2006), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74576, accessed 21 September 2015; Andy Simons, 'Black British Swing: The African Diaspora's Contribution to England's Own Jazz of the 1930s and 1940s', 22 December 2012, https://blackbritishswing.wordpress.com/2012/12/22/black-british-swing-the-african-diasporas-contribution-to-englands-own-jazz-of-the-1930s-and-1940s/, accessed 21 September 2015.

[76] Johnson's peculiar way of dancing made him choose the nickname of "Snakehips," which he took from the American dancer Earl Tucker, who popularised this way of dancing in Harlem during the 1920s.

The band was called different names, including "Emperors of Jazz" and "West Indian Swing". The musicians recruited to play in it were of different origins; some of them had just arrived from Jamaica, others had been in England for some time, or were local musicians. At the front of the stage Ken Johnson danced, and the English vocalist Winnie Cooper sang. Members of the rhythm section were Tom Wilson on drums from Birmingham; the bassist Abe "Pops" Clarke from the Caribbean, subsequently replaced by the coloured South African Bruce Vanderpoye; Joe Deniz on guitar from Cardiff; and the pianist Yorke de Souza from Jamaica. The horn section was formed of Thompson, the Jamaican Leslie "Jiver" Hutchinson and the Welsh Arthur Dibbin on trumpet; Albert "Bertie" King, born in Panama but who grew up in Jamaica, the Jamaican Louis Stephenson, and Robert Mumford-Taylor from London on saxophone; and the two English army musicians Reg Amore and Freddie Greensdale on trombone. As Thompson was not able to find Jamaican trombonists in London, he included the white trombonists Amore and Greensdale, who applied black paint to their faces to appear black up during the shows.[77]

Despite the variety of the musicians' origins, Thompson recalled that they got on well. For him the reason was that "in Britain you are black or you are white. And we weren't white. We all expected different treatment, and that united us."[78] In general, Thompson saw the colour of the skin as a fundamental factor for the group's collective feeling, especially in dance music in the 1930s:

> Every dance musician in Europe aimed at being American. Black or white, you aimed at being American. So the "all-coloured" bands aimed to be American, and we coloured chaps, united by our colour and by our ambitions, had a group feeling even if we came from Guiana, Jamaica, Africa, Barbados, Cardiff or London.[79]

It is worth noting that Thompson underlined how, despite musicians' different origins, blackness - as well as their ambition - was an essential and unifying element that created a sense

[77] Thompson recalled that there was a coloured trombonist whom he knew called Frank Williams, a Londoner who was "very, very, very English," but he did not seem to be comfortable with Afro-Caribbeans, and he did not want to go on tour. Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 95.
[78] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 94–95.
[79] Thompson and Green, 102.

of group feeling among musicians playing in all-coloured bands. In addition, he highlighted that American dance bands were the points of reference for dance bands in Europe.

Thompson worked hard with the members of the band until they achieved a sound akin to that of the American swing bands. The band toured provincial towns in order to team up so as to be ready to bring the show to London. They did cinema shows, and were well received. In autumn 1935 the London agent Ralph Deane went to see the band in Sheffield, and offered them to work in the West End, where the band's potential could be adequately shown and could try to achieve the success he thought they deserved. In December 1936, the band signed a six month contract at the Old Florida Club in Mayfair. Captain Hasley, the retired army officer who ran the club, liked the band's show, and on New Year's Eve 1937 they had their first performance there, which was very successful. However, after a few months, Ken Johnson signed another contract with Dean without informing Thompson and the other members of the band, so the band came to an end. Thompson was particularly shocked, for he had put in a big effort for the band and felt swindled.[80]

Determined to continue his career as leader of a coloured swing band, in 1936 Ken Johnson travelled to the Caribbean where he recruited musicians to form a new band, together with the musicians who had decided to stay with him. In mid-1937 the formation of the "Emperors of Swing," later renamed the "West Indian Dance Orchestra," included Leslie Hutchinson, Yorke de Souza, Joe Deniz, Tom Wilson and Abe Clare, and the newcomers Carl Barriteau, George Roberts and Dave Williams from Trinidad on saxophone, and the trumpeter Dave Wilkins from Barbados. Later other musicians joined the band, including Clinton Maxwell, a drummer from Jamaica, Frank Deniz on guitar, Clare Deniz on piano, and the singer Don Johnson.

As Andy Simons has reconstructed, Ken Johsnon's band was "out of the industry workers' loop." The wages musicians earned were higher than both the average wages that black musicians could earn in small swing groups performing in Soho and the official Musicians' Union rate for London musicians.[81] The newcomers from Trinidad were high-level players. They were offered a five-year contract, with a higher pay that they received on the Caribbean, however it was considerably less than the money other players in the band received.[82]

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[80] Thompson and Green, 96–98; Thompson and Green, 173–75. Thompson also made efforts at an economic level, as he invested the money that he had been saving since beginning work in England, in the band. It served to buy the band's equipment and costumes, to pay for publicity and photographs, to pay agents and managements, and also to provide for the musicians in the first weeks of activities.

[81] Simons, 'Black British Swing'.

[82] Dave Wilkins recalled that the pay for the newcomers was 5£ a week, while Joe Deniz recalled that his pay was 11£ a week. Wilkins, interview; Joe Deniz, interview by Val Wilmer, 21 July 1988, C122/45, BL NSA.

Significantly, in July 1937 the three newly-arrived saxophone players were the protagonists of the advertisement that appeared in the *Melody Maker* of the music shop Scarth located in Charing Cross Road, which sold saxophones made by the American company Conn.

Melody Maker XIII, n. 218 (24 July 1937)
BL, London.

The three, presented amongst "other brilliant artists" who used Conn saxophones, could be seen at the centre of the advertisment. On the right, a caption asked: "what better proof could you ask of CONN'S superiority for modern band work?" The advertisement appeared in the journal only two months after the three musicians arrived in London. This suggests that it was their joining Ken Johnson's band that gave them credibility as players. This is especially significant because they were black musicians who had only recently arrived from the colonies.

In the following years, Johnson's band began broadcasting for the BBC with successful results in terms of audience. The band also recorded with Decca and HMV, and obtained an engagement at the Café de Paris, an exclusive restaurant with entertainment in Coventry Street. They performed mainly standard dance music relying on stock arrangements as well as on arrangements done by band members such as Carl Barriteau, and external musicians. The band's history ended tragically with the bombing of the Café de Paris on 8th March 1941, which

resulted in the death of Ken Johnson and Dave Williams, and left Joe Deniz, Carl Barriteau, and Yorke de Souza injured.[83]

In addition to showing bandleaders' abilities to recruit musicians from their native countries through informal contacts, the case of Johnson's band shows how an all-coloured band did not correspond to a homogeneity in style and backgrounds. On the contrary, the various origins of the musicians employed show that it was built by joining different people with different backgrounds who interacted together. Headed by a charismatic leader and even with a frequent change of players, these talented musicians participated in a process that created a new sound in the London music scene and benefitted from being in the band as musicians. For instance, Joe Deniz recalled that, in addition to the good money he earned, it was a great thing to perform with those musicians because it elevated his own status as musician.[84]

[83] "The Profession Mourns," *Melody Maker* XVII, n. 399 (15 March 1941): 1
[84] Deniz, interview, 21 July 1988.

Another essential activity in the network of cooperation is what Becker has named the creation and maintenance of the rationale for the existence of the work of art. This rationale can take the form of an "aesthetic argument, a philosophical justification which identifies what is being made as art, as good art, and explains how art does something that needs to be done for people and society."[85] In the case of black genres of music, this activity became even more important because it was new kinds of music that were being introduced in a musical scene, and which were considered in ambiguous ways. In the music scenes of London and Paris this activity was performed through two principal means: journals and the radio. Journalists, critics and radio presenters were the three figures that performed this activity during the years under consideration here. They often had a double function: they discovered new bands or single musicians and promoted them. They also helped spread new genres of music through their work in the media, notably musical journals and radio broadcasts. The debate about new genres of music was lively, and also harsh in some cases. Still, in this climate several music journalists, critics and radio presenters had a great influence, as they made new genres known to the audience, not only as a consequence of their words, but also of their actions in those contexts.

One of the most prominent critics, whose work also had an international influence, was Hughes Pannassié. Raised in a wealthy family, between Paris and the Aveyron region in the south of France, the young Panassié first came into contact with jazz through dancing lessons, and later, through saxophone lessons. His introduction to this music was completed through his frequenting of clubs where French jazz musicians played, and with whom he began fruitful exchanges and friendships. He soon started writing articles for journals that specialised in jazz music, such as *La Revue du jazz* and *Jazz-Tango*. This way, in the early 1930s Panassié played an important role in the Parisian musical scene as a figure able to link jazz musicians, fans and critics.

His contribution to the Hot Club de France added additional value to his role. Founded in 1932, the club was intended to promote so-called "hot jazz," which made reference to the improvised style of African American musicians. With the name of "Jazz-Club Universitaire," it had been established by two university students, who wanted to promote jazz music among their fellows, but with the engagement of Panassié the club's focus gained a wider scope. In order to publicise

[85] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 4.

the group and to spread the music, the club's members managed to have visibility on the magazine *Jazz-Tango*, to transmit regular broadcasts with explanations of the music through a small Paris radio station. And, they organised live concerts, the first ones in the record store La Boîte à Musique in Montparnasse, owned by the father of Jean-Louis Levy-Alvarez, one of the club members. The Quintette du Hot Club de France, led by Django Reinhardt and Stépane Grappelli, formed in these years, and was to have a great influence at national and international levels.

Even if Panassié left Paris in 1933, he continued to play a fundamental role. In 1934 he published the book *Le Jazz hot* with the scope of giving definition to jazz music, which he intended to be derived specifically from innate black qualities. His effort was directed at helping French people understand jazz by explaining how it was played, its characteristics, and also its history in continuation of the black tradition that had mixed with white ways of playing. This is an example of how he was performing what I have previously mentioned as the creation of reputation for a work of music. In the following years, Panassié made radio broadcasts, gave public lectures in Paris and throughout France, founded the record label Swing together with Charles Delaunay, and wrote other books devoted to explaining jazz.[86] Panassié was influenced and fascinated by the music arriving in France from overseas, and wanted to give recognition to this style of jazz, which to him deserved to be spread, and also defended. He tried to do so by including French musicians, not by excluding them. His influence as a critic with his books and reviews found appreciation at an international level, as his reception among the world of New York music critics proved during his journey in the United States.

Another figure who played a fundamental role in the London music scene was the aforementioned Denis Preston, an English critic and radio presenter who eventually became an influential record producer.

As a teenager, Preston began studying the viola wanting to become a professional musician, but he did not find regular occupation as a player, therefore he started working as an assistant stage manager in theatres. Seeing Louis Armstrong in London in 1932 struck passion for jazz into his heart. This newly discovered love, and the meeting with other young jazz fans influenced him to begin to writing for journals. Indeed, he contributed to various musical magazines, including the *Melody Maker* and the review *Jazz Music* founded by his friend Max Jones and other jazz devotees in 1943. In line with the journal's orientation, which aimed at asserting the role of

[86] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 168–78.

African American music, Preston wrote articles on black music and literature. As I have noted above in the case of Panassié, his activity as a journalist who wrote about black genres of music contributed to the creation of a reputation for that music. This was true also for his work as a radio presenter. During the Second World War Preston also began broadcasting for the BBC, where he presented the programme Radio Rhythm Club on which he introduced listeners to new styles of jazz.[87] The case of Preston is illustrative of how in the music scene, the overlapping of roles occurred, through a path that brought him from being a jazz fan to being a musical critic and radio presenter, and, as we have previously seen, eventually an extremely influential music producer.

The overlapping of roles in the field of music critique also occurred with regard to musicians who began to write for music journals. This happened in the case of some of the musicians who played with Grégor in Paris, and wrote in his journal *La Revue du Jazz*. Created in 1929, the magazine lasted only until February 1930. Even though it had such short existence, the journal was important because it was the first magazine entirely dedicated to jazz in France, and it contained contributions not only written by critics but also by musicians. Moreover, as Grégor wrote in the first issue, *La Revue du Jazz* was meant to be the first French professional journal that gathered publishers, bandleaders and dancing musicians.[88]

The case of the members of Grégor's band shows that the overlapping of roles occurred especially when magazines were devoted to specific and new styles of music, such as jazz. For instance, Stéphane Mougin frequently wrote for *Jazz-Tango* and other magazines. Additionally, several musicians who played those genres were asked to contribute to typically newly-founded journals. These reviews often served as tools for spreading knowledge of and ideas about new genres, and so they contributed to create the reputation for black genres of music.

Patrick "Spike" Hughes is another example of this overlapping. During the 1930s, Hughes combined his activity as a bandleader and composer with his engagement as a music critic. Of Irish origin, Hughes studied composition and orchestration in Vienna and Berlin in the 1920s, before becoming a self-taught bass player in London. While making quick progress on the instrument – he mastered new techniques imported from the US, such as slapping in a brief period – and playing with his band in London clubs, he also worked as an arranger, as I have

[87] Val Wilmer, "Preston, (Sydney) Denis (1916–1979)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2015), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/75566, accessed 21 Sept 2015; Cowley, "London Is the Place," 65–67

[88] Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 129.

mentioned before. In 1930 Hughes led his own band, which recorded for the label Decca Records. It was in those same years that he started working as a music critic for various reviews.

In 1931 Hughes was employed as a critic for the *Melody Maker*. He got the job through his connection with a drummer who was playing with him in a show and who was working as assistant editor of the *Melody Maker*. Once when Hughes complained about the inaccuracies he noticed in several reviews the drummer offered him to do the job in his place. Under the pseudonym "Mike," Hughes started his career as a journalist. Initially he wrote reviews of "hot" records, but afterwards he gained wider space through his articles in a regular column. This column gave him the opportunity to cover issues linked to music theory and what he defined as "propaganda." As he wrote in his autobiography, "it became an increasingly personal column, and I wrote it with all the fervour of a musical missionary determined to convert the heathen to better things."[89] His influence on other journalists and on the way in which to write about jazz was significant, and transcended British borders as demonstrated by the article titled "Les erreurs de 'Mike'," published in *Jazz-Tango* in 1934 and dedicated to the mistakes the editors of the French journal noted about his articles on jazz.[90]

This chapter has aimed at describing and bringing to life the network of activities that were essential for music production and circulation. This division of labour within the urban music scenes can be read as part of the process of development of the music industry that had started before the First World War (e.g. music stores founded in the late nineteenth century), but was also linked to the specific developments of these years with the spread of dance music.

The sources analysed describe a varied and diverse group of people involved in the music scene, that included both white and black artists with different backgrounds. Both in Paris and London, the role played by musicians changed over time covering a multitude of roles which in many cases overlapped. In this fluid urban context the same person could be, for example, musician and club manager, or musician and critic. It is especially noteworthy that there were various examples of black people who became club owners.

People performing these activities in the music scene created a network of cooperation across music genres, including black genres. This study shows that a similar development of a diverse

[89] Spike Hughes, *Second Movement: Continuing the Autobiography of Spike Hughes* (London: Museum Press, 1951), 111–14.
[90] "Les erreurs de 'Mike'," *Jazz-Tango* V, no. 42 (Mars 1933): 6.

network of cooperation in the music scene existed in both Paris and London, which tended to operate around specific urban areas where entertainment business could be found.

This cooperative network in the music scenes was at the basis of the production and circulation of any kind of music, including black genres. The latter played a crucial role in these urban contexts as their influence was very significant in the music environment. This implies that there was a specificity regarding black genres of music in the music scenes, as styles which had to be learned, but also a variety of perceptions and receptions of blackness.

Chapter 4

Black Music Styles as Vehicles for Trans-racial Interplay: Practices of Learning, Perceptions of Blackness and Commercialisation of Music

Look upon this colour problem
in a more enlightened way.
Give credit where credit is due.
And give to the Negro just that measure of freedom
and opportunity which you ask for yourselves.
Rudolph Dunbar (1934)[1]

Mais combien durent s'adapter à la mode pour survivre!
Le "business" aboutit à la mort de toute créativité:
il préfère la prudence, c'est-à-dire la répétition,
la reproduction au détriment de l'évolution.
Stéphane Grappelli
Mon violon pour tout bagage
(1992)[2]

The spread of African American and Caribbean genres of music brought changes to the music field. In 2000 the musicologist Richard Middleton maintained that the evolution of Western music created a range of others (folk, popular, exotic) that are differently articulated in music. He suggested widening Paul Gilroy's idea of the Black Atlantic and "to think more broadly of a 'Low Atlantic' which poses popular against elite, and of how 'low' and black relate to each other."[3] In this sense, black music genres in London and Paris were both black and low, as they came from minority groups and from people arrived in the cities from colonial territories

* An earlier version of part of this chapter has been published in the essay: "Black Music Styles as Vehicles for Transnational and Trans-Racial Exchange: Perceptions of Blackness in the Music Scenes of London and Paris (1920s-1950s)," in Irene Fattacciu and Claudio Fogu, eds., *Zapruder World: An International Journal for the History of Social Conflict* 4 (2017)

[1] Rudolph Dunbar, "Adventures of a Black Man. What the Colour Bar Means to the Individual," *Melody Maker* X, no. 52 (19 May 1934): 11.
[2] Grappelli, *Mon Violon*, 159.
[3] Richard Middleton, 'Musical Belongings: Western Music and Its Low-Other', in *Western Music and Its Others: Difference, Representation, and Appropriation in Music* (Berkley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2000), 60.

and countries in a socially and economically subordinated position, such as Cuba. Musicians who entered into contact with these new musical tendencies, learned new genres and incorporated new styles into theirs, thus creating new sounds. Black musicians and composers played a crucial role as driving forces in dance music, a role that was recognised by many within the music community. In this sense, black styles such as jazz, rumba, and calypso, functioned as vehicles for trans-racial exchanges in the music scenes of London and Paris: the spread of black genres contributed to the creation of a trans-racial environment in those music scenes.

Building on what Françoise Lionnet and Shu-mei Shih suggest in their book *Minor Transnationalism*, in the music scenes of London and Paris minority groups – both blacks and migrants – produced "minor cultural articulations" that were "in productive relationship with the major [...], as well as minor-to-minor networks that circumvent the major altogether."[4] In this sense, this chapter contributed to the understanding of racialisation following the call to consider "historical locality and signification" that Mica Nava has claimed, in an effort to "establish the variations and specificity of race relations and cosmopolitanism."[5]

Following the criticism expressed by Karl Hangstrom Miller with regard to analyses that have tended to conceive music as the product of musicians' personal talent or social identities,[6] I find it fundamental to include in the investigation the process of learning new genres of music, which I analyse in the first section of the chapter. Howard Becker has written that "every art world uses, to organize some of the cooperation between some of its participants, conventions known to all or almost all well socialized members of the society in which it exists,"[7] and has called for studies devoted to the exploration of the ways in which assessments of styles circulate in art worlds.[8] Moreover, he has explained that artists learn other conventions "in the course of training and as they participate in the day-to-day activities of the art world. […] Conventions represent the continuing adjustment of the cooperating parties to the changing conditions in which they practice; as conditions change, they change."[9] Building on this idea, I draw attention to the practices through which a black form of art was built in the music scenes of London and Paris with an exploration of the process of learning new genres of music and the role played by transnational migrant musicians in this process. The different practices of learning black genres of music that musicians adopted included teaching, journals and books, and informal ways of

[4] Lionnet and Shih, *Minor Transnationalism*, 8.
[5] Nava, *Visceral Cosmopolitanism*, 6–7.
[6] Miller, 'Working Musicians: Exploring the Rhetorical Ties Between Musical Labour and Leisure', 428.
[7] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 42.
[8] Becker, 55.
[9] Becker, 59.

learning. As Andy Bennett has underlined, "globally established popular musical styles can be readily plucked from their global context and reworked in ways that make them more culturally significant to musicians and fans in particular local contexts. This transformation includes the reinscription of musical styles with local meanings."[10]

The second section of the chapter deals with the meaning of blackness in the music scenes of London and Paris. The presence of different groups of black musicians and the spread of new genres of music from the other side of the Atlantic influenced the meaning that blackness had for musicians in the music scenes of the two cities. Indeed, they worked in a specific musical network that was not strictly defined, neither at a musical level because black music had many meanings, nor with regard to the social environment because of the cosmopolitan contexts in which musicians worked. The project "Oral History of Jazz in Britain" held at the British Library comprises a series of interviews with people who were active on the London music scene, mainly musicians but also producers and critics. These sources have been crucial to help shed light on the variety of perceptions of blackness that a specific category of people performing music had on the London music scene, and to introduce a concept which I have labelled "indifference to blackness," linked mainly to the fact that several musicians seemed to convey a sense of importance to music that went beyond racial and national issues.

A fundamental element with which musicians had to cope with was the development of the music industry which led to a process of commercialisation of music for dancing. This process took place both in urban spaces where music was performed, and on the air through radio broadcasts. Musicians often performed various genres of music and they were asked to play different styles that were more popular at that time, often in the same show. The demand for black genres of music associated to the spread of dance music from the United States, gave coloured musicians the opportunity to find jobs because they could represent the exotic element that the vogue of black styles relied on. In this context several musicians – both black and white, - lamented how in some cases not very talented black musicians obtained jobs, too. This was mainly linked to the fact that the demand for black musicians was driven by the commercialisation of black genres of music. Radio stations started to emerge in the 1920s and played a crucial role in this process. The third section of this chapter deals with this process of commercialisation and analyses part of the debate that emerged around it, especially around the concept of "authenticity." "Authenticity" is one of the main issues in the debate on popular

[10] Andy Bennett, 'Consolidating the Music Scenes Perspective', *Poetics* 32 (2004): 223–34.

music. As Richard Middleton has written this notion is crucial because "honesty (truth to cultural experience) becomes the validating criterion of musical value," especially when dealing with genres of "folk" music.[11] The debate on this concept has focused on whether authenticity is linked to a real essence whereby people express their culture and experience, or it is socially constructed. In this debate, Simon Frith has expressed an idea of authenticity linked to the assumption that social groups do not agree on values such as authenticity, and then expressed them in their cultural activities, but "they only get to know themselves as groups […] through cultural activity, through aesthetic judgement. Making music isn't a way of expressing ideas; it is a way of living them."[12] As Laura Speers has underlined, this perspective points to the centrality of cultural activities in producing social groups and suggests a connection to wider society; the pursuit of authenticity may be a response to societal shifts, hence the need to locate artists and scenes in their wider social contexts and explore the effort to achieve and maintain authenticity though cultural identity, group membership and experience.[13]

Building on this perspective, in the chapter I aim at shedding light and historicising the debate on authenticity, by analysing how musicians playing black genres of music conceived this notion when commercialisation could result in a superficial appropriation of new musical forms. Indeed, several musicians expressed strong criticism of the way of conceiving and making music, characterised by lack of musical talent and sensitivity brought by the process of commercialisation. In opposition to this, they emphasised the need for "authenticity" in music and the search for self-expression through it.

[11] Richard Middleton, *Studying Popular Music* (Milton Keynes and Philadelphia: Open University Press, 1990), 127.
[12] Simon Frith, 'Music and Identity', in *Questions of Cultural Identity* (Los Angeles and London: Sage, 1996), 111.
[13] Laura Speers, *Hip-Hop Authenticity and the London Scene: Living Out Authenticity in Popular Music* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017), 18–21.

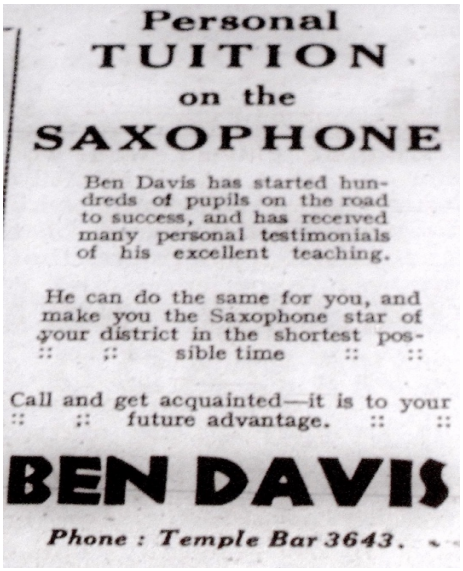
In the first stages of music developments in the early twentieth century, single musicians and bands often played various genres of music during the same show, such as jazz, rumba, calypso, all identified as "black" music by the audience. This blurring allowed musicians to perform genres of music which had different origins. However, this implies that they had to learn various genres of music and they had to be flexible enough to be able to learn them. The process of learning could find different ways of being put into practice.

The role that teachers and schools of music played was important in this sense. Besides self-taught musicians, one of the most widespread ways of learning an instrument was through private lessons with expert musicians. In many cases, the person who wanted to learn an instrument found a teacher by word-of-mouth, but there were teachers who publicised their activity in music journals in the hope of attracting new students. For instance, in order to promote his activity, a French saxophone teacher published an advertisement in *L'artiste musicien de Paris* in 1929:

L'artiste musicien de Paris XIV, No.133 (Février 1929)
BnF, Paris

It is worth noting that the advertisement underlined the fact that the teacher taught the American style of playing and improvisation, and that the lessons were modelled on the teaching methods used by professional musicians. Advertisements that promoted personal lessons on the saxophone were common in journals and testified to the spread of brass

instruments together with the spread of jazz music. Moreover, the idea of being able to learn in a short period of time, which was guaranteed by the teacher, is another recurring element in advertisements. For instance, in 1930 the *Melody Maker* published an advertisement on the English saxophonist Ben Davis who offered private lessons on the saxophone. The advertisement pointed to the teacher's abilities to make students successful musicians within a brief period of time. The caption states that Ben Davies had "started hundreds of pupils on the road to success" and exhorted readers adding: "he can do the same for you, and make you the Saxophone star of your district in the shortest possible time."

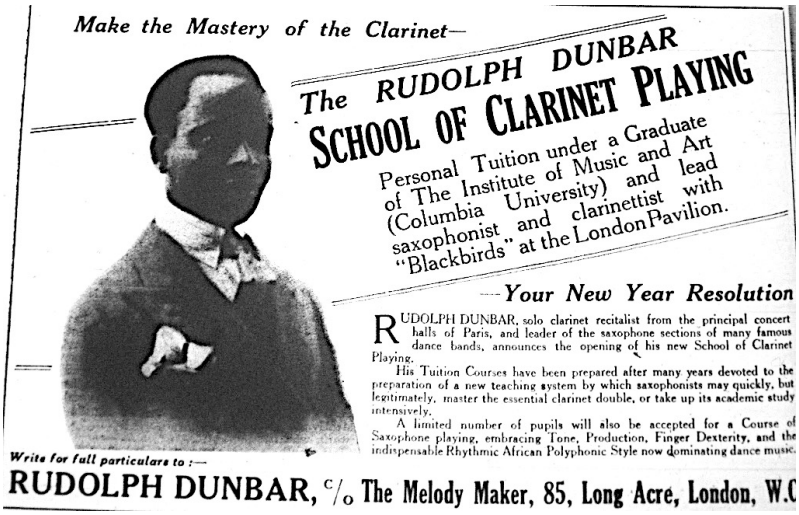


Melody Maker V, n. 50 (February 1930): 154
BL, London

Several music schools made advertisements in musical journals in order to promote their activities. The "Keech" school of music, located in the area of Mayfair in Central London, published its advertisement in the *Melody Maker* in 1932. In this case too, the caption pointed to the quality of the teaching and to the perspective of getting quick results, too. It is worth noting the kinds of instruments taught in the school. The school provided drums, rhythm style piano, saxophone, Hawaiian guitar, banjo, ukulele, and a particular type of banjo-ukulele called "banjulele" courses. The teaching of these instruments is an indication of the spread of new genres of music in the music scene that required those specific instruments or particular ways of playing.

Melody Maker VII, n. 82 (October 1932): 782
BL, London

The music scenes gave new arrivals the opportunity to play an important role in the music scene as teachers. The case of Rudolph Dunbar is a significant example in this sense. The Guyanese-born clarinettist and composer, who had pursued his musical studies in New York and then in Paris in the mid-1920s, moved to London in the summer of 1931. Within a few months, he founded a clarinet school located in the West End of London.[14] Immediately after its foundation, the *Melody Maker* published an advertisement that promoted his school.



Melody Maker VII, n. 73 (January 1932): 74
BL, London

[14] Rye, 'Dunbar, Rudolph (1899-1988)'.

It is worth noting that on the left of the advertisement there was a photo of Dunbar and on the right, the title stressed both his studies at the Institute of Music and Art of the Columbia University in New York and his role of lead saxophonist and clarinettist with the all-black American show *Blackbirds* that had been performed in London a few years earlier.[15] Moreover, the caption, which contained a description of Dunbar and his school, stressed that he was one of the main clarinettist who played in the principal concert halls in Paris, and leader of the saxophone sections of many well-known dance bands. In addition to the clarinet courses, Dunbar also offered a saxophone course that included "the indispensable Rhythmic African Polyphonic Style now dominating dance music." What is revealing about this advertisement is the fact that the promotion of this Guyanese-born musician in a musical journal published in Britain, comprised the reference to his musical career in New York (his studies and his playing in an important show), and in Paris. These two elements were emphasised to denote his quality as a musician and as a teacher; an element that shows how a musician who grew up in a colonial territory, and who had travelled and trained as a musician in two of the most important urban music scenes worldwide, came to be someone who transmitted knowledge to musicians in Britain.

A few months before the school was founded, Dunbar had begun to write a series of articles on the clarinet for the *Melody Maker* that formed a course on clarinet playing published periodically in the journal. The first of these articles appeared in October 1931. On that occasion, the editors presented a series of lessons writing about the difficulties in finding the right musician who could do the course: "few dance clarinet players have an absolutely thorough theoretical as well as practical mastery of the instrument. The one or two who have, would not, or could not, express themselves on paper. We hailed the advent of Rudolph Dunbar with delight, therefore." Dunbar's technical abilities on the instrument and his practical knowledge of "hot" music were deemed as an "almost unique combination of talent." This, together with the ability to write clearly, made him the right person to become technical editor. It is worth noting that, presenting the course, Dunbar wrote that it was not "a course on legitimate clarinet playing, but a series of lessons for dance band saxophone players who wish

[15] *Blackbirds* were a series of musicals with an all-black cast that had great success on Broadway in 1926 and were performed in Paris and London in the following years. Cary D. Wintz and Paul Finkelman, eds., 'Blackbirds', in *Encyclopedia of the Harlem Renaissance: A-J*, Q (New York and London: Routledge, 2004).

to 'double' the clarinet without hope or intention of becoming a virtuoso of the instrument." Further, he added that, since saxophone players were often afraid to start playing the clarinet, which he considered to be the most difficult among the wind instruments, the aim of the course was to make saxophone players aware that they were mistaken and that they could play the instrument.[16]

Articles devoted to specific genres of music appeared in various music journals and were tools with which musicians could learn more about new genres of music. For instance, both *Jazz-Tango* and the *Melody Maker* published articles dedicated to the Cuban genre of the rumba. In March 1933, *Jazz-Tango* published an article entitled "L'Interprétation de la rumba" in which a French jazz pianist exposed the main elements for the correct execution of the rumba. At the beginning of the article, the musician wrote that the rhythm was difficult to assimilate for French people for various reasons, including the "nonchalance exotique" of the dance that collided with what he though was the nervous mood typical of French people. What followed in the article was the explanation of the roles that different instruments played in a dance band, starting from the rhythmic section formed by the clave and the maracas.[17] In April 1936 the guitarist who played with the American dance bandleader Roy Fox, wrote the first of a similar series of articles for the *Melody Maker* that differentiated between various styles of rumba played by different bands, and was specifically devoted to the role of the guitar in one of these styles.[18] In both cases the authors, who had learned to play the rumba in France and England, made reference to the music of Don Barreto as a great example for the understanding of the correct way to play the genre.

It was Don Barreto who wrote a series of technical articles on the rumba in *Jazz-Tango* starting in July 1936. The first article is interesting because it explored the history of Cuban genres of music. Barreto explained that the rumba internationalised by American records was not the real rumba but the son, a Cuban dance, which, he affirmed, was not exclusively a black dance, because in Cuba racial antagonism did not exist. Neither did black or white music, but a national music with African roots. The son, which was usually confused with the rumba, emerged from the Eastern part of the island and was danced initially by the lower classes before becoming the dance of the upper-middle classes, too. Then, it spread in Hollywood and Paris

[16] "A Comprehensive Course For The Clarinet No. 1. Types of Instruments," *Melody Maker* VI, no. 70 (October 1931): 841.
[17] "Pour nous, Français, ce rythme est assez difficile à assimiler, pour plusieurs raisons. D'abord, la nonchalance exotique de cette danse se heurte à notre tempérament nerveux." R. Gottlieb, "L'interprétation de la rumba," *Jazz-Tango-Dancing* IV, n. 30 (Mars 1933): 9.
[18] Ivor Mairants, "The Rumba and the Guitar," *Melody Maker* XII, n. 151 (11 April 1936): 7.

and from there it became known worldwide. Nevertheless, Barreto added at the end of the article, the rhythms of the rumba and the son were not only the products of African passion, but also of the specific environment on the island:

> Ils sont aussi fils de la lubricité du tropique. C'est l'âme de l'Ile merveilleuse, dont Hérédia sentait le parfum aphrodisiaque par dessus la mer à des milles et des milles.[19]

The Trinidadian musician Rupert Nurse recalled that he learnt orchestration through a book by Glenn Miller, that he sent away for in the United States.[20] Indeed, another way to learn new genres of music was through books dedicated to specific instruments and styles of music. Among these was the series of books that the composer Hector Rawson wrote in 1940. Rawson published different books on jazz and swing for various typical instruments of the genre, such as trumpet and saxophone. In the preface to the *Méthode complète Jazz Hot Swing pour trompette*, Rawson explained that the main reason for publishing the book was the importance of studying music to reach a good playing level for jazz music; a genre which people too often thought did not require an accurate and structured method:

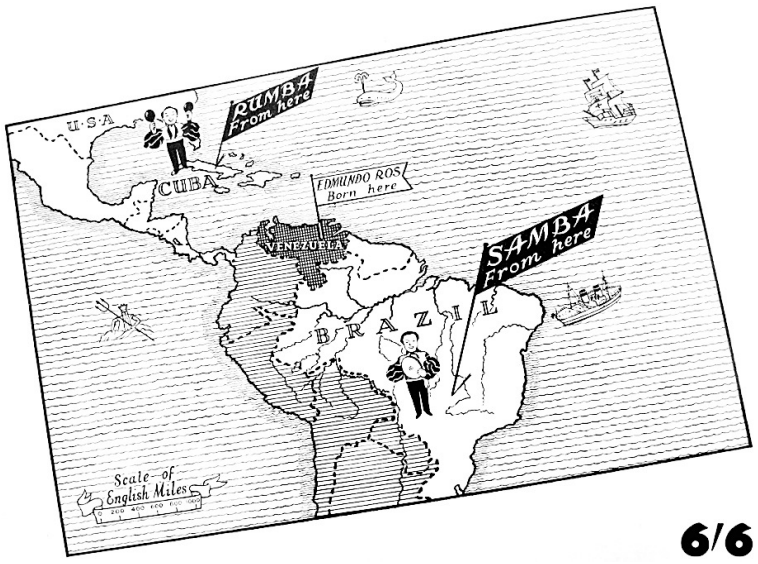
> Tous les instrumentistes désirent interpréter "Jazz," le "Hot," le "Swing" d'une manière parfait, et exécuter les danses modernes dans le style qui leur est propre. Il n'est pas facile, comme on le croit trop souvent, d'obtenir un résultat parallèle aux efforts studieux de l'élève isolé, étudiant sans méthode ni conseils judicieusement appropriés. C'est pourquoi, afin de répondre au désir de ceux qui reconnaissent l'impossibilité d'apprendre seuls et par leurs propres moyens, nous présentons cet ouvrage, conçu et réalisé dans le but de former des trompettistes accomplis en matière de Jazz-Hot-Swing en quelques semaines de travail.[21]

[19] M. Barreto, "Autour de la Rumba", *Jazz-Tango-Dancing* III, n. 22 (Juillet 1932): 7
[20] Rupert Nurse, interview by Val Wilmer, 4 October 1992, C122/154, BL NSA.
[21] BnF, AUD, fonds Charles Delaunay, Boîte no. 41, Hector Rawson, *Méthode complète Jazz Hot Swing pour trompette*, [date unknown (a/n)]: 2

The 33 pages in the book outlined the main characteristics of jazz and the role of the trumpet in it, before giving a brief description of the forms of hot jazz and swing. On the final page, the reader found a list of special terms used in jazz music and employed in the book; a fact that suggests the need to address the specificity of a new language.[22]

Edmundo Ros was another case of a musician who wrote books dedicated to specific genres of music. In 1950 Ros published a book titled *The Latin-American Way. Latin-American Music Its Instruments and How to Play Them*. In the book he introduced and explained the instruments used in Latin music hoping to "increase the understanding of Latin-American music and the special instruments used in its performance, and by increasing understanding, add to the enjoyment of players, dancers and listeners."[23]

The book opens with an illustrated map of Central and South American with two flags indicating where rumba and samba emerged, and two men with the typical instruments of the two genres. In between them another flag indicated Venezuela instead of Trinidad as the country where Edmundo Ros was born.



Map published in the book by Edmundo Ros *The Latin-American Way. Latin-American Music Its Instruments and How to Play Them* (1950).
BL, London

[22] Hector Roawson wrote various volumes dedicated to the teaching of jazz, swing, and also what the title of one of his books defined as "tropical" music: Hector Rawson, *Enseignement Moderne Du Jazz, Du Hot, Du Swing, de l'Improvisation, de La Musique "Typique" et "Tropicale" Pour La Clarinette et Les Saxophones* (Paris and Bruxelles: Lemoine, 1956).
[23] Edmundo Ros, *The Latin-American Way. Latin-American Music Its Instruments and How to Play Them* (London: Rose, Morris & Co, 1950), 1.

This illustrated map was part of the idea of the book as an effort to show the origins of these genres of music in a simplified way. The book begins with a section about the origins of the instruments, in which Ros briefly reconstructs the history of Latin-American music and its diffusion worldwide. He draws attention to samba and rumba, pointing to the differences that influenced the way in which they should be analysed:

> While Samba and Rumba fall under the heading of Latin-American music they are really quite different from each other because they originate from different parts of the South American continent, have different histories, and each its own special group of rhythm instruments. […] Just as the history of Samba is different from that of the Rumba so the styles of the two forms must be treated as different from one another. They cannot be discussed together under the heading 'Latin-American,' but must be regarded separately.[24]

However, Ros also identifies common features between genres that were linked to the rhythm section which he defines as "the rock on which Latin-American music is built." Indeed, Ros oscillates between two apparently contrasting directions. On the one hand, he underlines the differences between samba and rumba, and in particular he describes the variety of instruments used to play the two genres of music. On the other, he includes samba and rumba in the broad category of Latin-American music, talking about a "true Latin-American character."[25] These two elements are part of his attempts to illustrate genres of music that were commonly identified as Latin-American while explaining the differences between them in an effort to give readers more complete information about them, thus "extend the knowledge and appreciation of authentic Latin-American Music as widely as possible."[26]

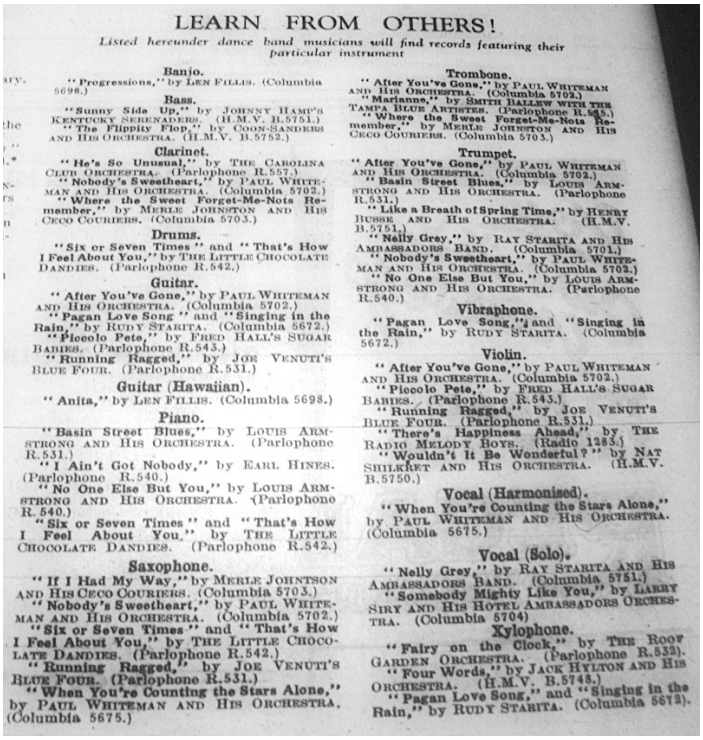
After a brief biography of Ros, the book examines some of the typical rhythmic instruments used to play rumba (bongos, claves, maracas and timbales), and samba (cabaça, chocolo, reso-reso and samba-tambourine) with the rhythmic notation on a musical stave. At the end of each

[24] Ros, 3.
[25] Ros, 4.
[26] Ros, 7.

section, the various rhythms are presented together in order to show how they work with one another as a rhythmic section. In addition, the book gives short examples of the various forms of rumba and samba, and of genres that derived from the original rhythm. The book concludes with four brief compositions written by Ros based on several different genres explained in the previous pages and with an advertisement of Latin American instruments designed by him and manufactured by a company based around the Old Street area in London.

Articles in journals and books devoted to specific genres of music were ways in which musicians could learn about styles with which they were not familiar. However, as the comment on Dunbar's first article of his clarinet series suggested ("the one or two who have, would not, or could not, express themselves on paper"), not all musicians were able to learn through books and journals. In addition, learning through written sources requires a certain degree of musical training that not all musicians had. Thus, other ways of learning were essential, which can be labelled as "informal tools." Among these "informal tools" was learning through records. Recorded music came to be of crucial importance for musicians willing to play dance music, and some of the musicians who travelled especially back and forth to the United States brought new discs to Europe. For instance, Bricktop recalled that the African American saxophone player Sammy Richardson, who was active in the Paris music scene, used to go to New York quite often to pick up music.[27] Leslie Thompson also recalled that when he worked on American shows, there were members of the cast who brought over the latest records from New York: they all had portable record players, so musicians and dancers employed in the show could hear the new records any time they wanted.[28] It is worth noting that in 1930 the *Melody Maker* published a list of recorded tunes divided by type of instrument. The title above the list said "Learn From Others! Listed hereunder dance band musicians will find records featuring their particular instrument," an element that show how learning from records was considered important for performing dance music.

[27] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 120.
[28] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 74.



LEARN FROM OTHERS!

Listed hereunder dance band musicians will find records featuring their particular instrument

Banjo.

"Progressions," by LEN FILLIS. (Columbia 5698.)

Bass.

"Sunny Side Up," by JOHNNY HAMP'S KENTUCKY SERENADERS. (H.M.V. B.5751.)

"The Flippity Flop," by COON-SANDERS AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (H.M.V. B.5752.)

Clarinet.

"He's So Unusual," by THE CAROLINA CLUB ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.557.)

"Nobody's Sweetheart," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Where the Sweet Forget-Me-Nots Remember," by MERLE JOHNSTON AND HIS CECO COURIERS. (Columbia 5703.)

Drums.

"Six or Seven Times" and "That's How I Feel About You," by THE LITTLE CHOCOLATE DANDIES. (Parlophone R.542.)

Guitar.

"After You've Gone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Pagan Love Song" and "Singing in the Rain," by RUDY STARITA. (Columbia 5672.)

"Piccolo Pete," by FRED HALL'S SUGAR BABIES. (Parlophone R.543.)

"Running Ragged," by JOE VENUTI'S BLUE FOUR. (Parlophone R.531.)

Guitar (Hawaiian).

"Anita," by LEN FILLIS. (Columbia 5698.)

Piano.

"Basin Street Blues," by LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.531.)

"I Ain't Got Nobody," by EARL HINES. (Parlophone R.540.)

"No One Else But You," by LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.540.)

"Six or Seven Times" and "That's How I Feel About You," by THE LITTLE CHOCOLATE DANDIES. (Parlophone R.542.)

Saxophone.

"If I Had My Way," by MERLE JOHNTSON AND HIS CECO COURIERS. (Columbia 5703.)

"Nobody's Sweetheart," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Six or Seven Times" and "That's How I Feel About You," by THE LITTLE CHOCOLATE DANDIES. (Parlophone R.542.)

"Running Ragged," by JOE VENUTI'S BLUE FOUR. (Parlophone R.531.)

"When You're Counting the Stars Alone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5675.)

Trombone.

"After You've Gone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Marianne," by SMITH BALLEW WITH THE TAMPA BLUE ARTISTES. (Parlophone R.555.)

"Where the Sweet Forget-Me-Nots Remember," by MERLE JOHNSTON AND HIS CECO COURIERS. (Columbia 5703.)

Trumpet.

"After You've Gone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Basin Street Blues," by LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.531.)

"Like a Breath of Spring Time," by HENRY BUSSE AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (H.M.V. B.5751.)

"Nelly Grey," by RAY STARITA AND HIS AMBASSADORS BAND. (Columbia 5701.)

"Nobody's Sweetheart," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"No One Else But You," by LOUIS ARMSTRONG AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.540.)

Vibraphone.

"Pagan Love Song," and "Singing in the Rain," by RUDY STARITA. (Columbia 5672.)

Violin.

"After You've Gone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5702.)

"Piccolo Pete," by FRED HALL'S SUGAR BABIES. (Parlophone R.543.)

"Running Ragged," by JOE VENUTI'S BLUE FOUR. (Parlophone R.531.)

"There's Happiness Ahead," by THE RADIO MELODY BOYS. (Radio 1385.)

"Wouldn't It Be Wonderful?" by NAT SHILKRET AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (H.M.V. B.5750.)

Vocal (Harmonised).

"When You're Counting the Stars Alone," by PAUL WHITEMAN AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5675.)

Vocal (Solo).

"Nelly Grey," by RAY STARITA AND HIS AMBASSADORS BAND. (Columbia 5751.)

"Somebody Mighty Like You," by LARRY SIRY AND HIS HOTEL AMBASSADORS ORCHESTRA. (Columbia 5704)

Xylophone.

"Fairy on the Clock," by THE ROOF GARDEN ORCHESTRA. (Parlophone R.533).

"Four Words," by JACK HYLTON AND HIS ORCHESTRA. (H.M.V. B.5748.)

"Pagan Love Song," and "Singing in the Rain," by RUDY STARITA. (Columbia 5672).

Melody Maker V, No.50 (February 1930): 151
BL, London

The London-born clarinettist Monty Sunshine recalled that in the early days besides music stores, the only other way of obtaining records was by going to recitals, where he met the music producer Denis Preston:

> I used to go to a pub in Windmill Street, top end of Brewer Street, go upstairs, you paid to enter and there would be a group of people, enthusiasts, who talked about their records and, sitting in front of a record player, put records on. There was where I met Denis [*Preston* (a/n)] for the first time. He used to give occasional recitals. He was an entrepreneur in getting bands to play, and was very lucky to meet up with some people that had the record studio.[29]

Learning from records was a fundamental form of informal tuition. Records were sources that enabled musicians to learn new genres and keep up-to-date with new music published, even if they were geographically far apart from the place where that music originated. In this sense, learning from was a new form of learning through new technological developments –

[29] Sunshine, interview.

mechanisation of music, - which was linked to the essential oral tradition that characterised the development of black genres of music.

Jam sessions were the basis of the development of black styles of music, notably jazz which gives great importance to improvisation. A fundamental way of learning new genres of music also came from the direct contact with musicians who played them. This was the case of musicians who grew up in areas where migrant communities settled. For instance, both the guitarist Joe Deniz and the pianist Clare Deniz recalled that as Cardiff was a port city, a lot of people arrived from different part of the world, particularly from the Caribbean. Clare Deniz remembered that when she was young she used to go to dance nights and listen to musicians from the Caribbean playing calypso, which she loved, and which influenced her musically.[30] Also Joe Deniz recalled that the first music he heard was mainly calypso because of the influence of Caribbean migrants in Cardiff, which he defined as a "cosmopolitan place," comprising many nationalities. In addition, he recalled that because of this influence there was no tradition of brass bands, and that they came to know jazz only from records and from shows to which his mother used to take him and his brothers.[31] Frank and Joe Deniz experiences show that travelling was another way in which musicians came to know new genres of music. As we have seen in Chapter 2, the two brothers started working as seamen and had the opportunity to listen to local bands and radios when their ship docked in ports. Musicians who had the chance to enter into direct contact with genres of music while travelling were able to see the differences between those genres performed in Europe with the "authentic" styles. For instance, in 1931 the *Melody Maker* published an article, which was a dialogue between two musicians about the rumba. One of the two said that one musician had just told him "some dope about the *real* rumba bands." This player reveals the details because he had been working on a cruise and one of his trips took him to La Havana where, in a local dance hall, he "saw and heard the native musicians playing the real thing."[32]

The encounters between musicians who were active in the music scenes of London and Paris and musicians who travelled to or who arrived in the two cities, were fundamental for the learning process. Indeed, one of the most effective ways of learning new genres of music was through direct contacts between musicians playing together and rehearsing. What Leslie Thompson recalled in his autobiography with regard to his participation to two attempts to form

[30] Clare Deniz, interview by Val Wilmer, 21 July 1989, C122/76, BL NSA.
[31] Deniz, interview, 21 July 1988.
[32] Lou Stevenson and Dan Ingman, "Rumba This Business," *Melody Maker* VI, no. 66 (June 1931): 515.

an all-coloured band in Britain is illustrative of this process. The first attempt was made by George Clapham in 1929, but despite the effort and the rehearsals, the attempt was unsuccessful because the band could not reach an adequate level of performance comparable to that of American big bands in fashion at the time.[33] The second attempt at forming an all-coloured band a few years later by Thompson and Ken Johnson in 1936 was successful but it required an intense period of rehearsals, during which the band members had to work hard to compete with American ensembles:

> I made them rehearse to get that lift that Jimmy Lunceford and Ellington were getting on their records. The brass and reed sections sat and waited as I got the four to work on that rhythm, to get the lift or swing. Not just four beats in a bar, but giving it that American bounce. What they called swing. It was hard work.[34]

Louis Stephenson, one of the saxophone players in the band, remembered a lot of rehearsing with the band in Max's Rehearsal Room in Denman Street in Soho, and in a studio in the St. John's Wood area in North West of London. As he recalled, Stephenson was not really into music, and he admitted that for him rehearsals were particularly hard.[35]

In many cases in the music scenes of both London and Paris, bands often played various genres of music in the same show that were presented and labelled as "black" music. This blurring made musicians learn and perform genres of music which had different origins, and gave "blackness" multiple meanings.

[33] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 64.
[34] Thompson and Green, 95.
[35] Louis Stephenson, interview by Val Wilmer, 28 October 1987, C122/39, BL NSA.

Intellectuals, writers, artists and historians have recognised the fundamental role of black genres of music in the evolution of music in general because their influence has been considerable. In the early twentieth century, not only did the spread of blues and early forms of jazz throughout the world represent one of the greatest musical influences of the century, but it also influenced other art forms.

The musical networks of globalising metropolises such as London and Paris were not strictly defined at a musical level because black music had different meanings, or at a social level because of the cosmopolitan contexts in which musicians worked. Feelings of personal belonging of musicians differed, and were related to multiple meanings given to blackness, to the empire and to the nation.

One issue to be considered is the ways in which differentiation between groups and individuals who were part of the music scenes and played black genres of music, were perceived. This differentiation was linked to various aspects, including the place of origin and musicians' musical formation.

Stanley Jackson in his guide to Soho *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho* (1946) described the variety of groups of coloured people that frequented the area, underlining the differences between them.

> In Soho you will find coloured men from all parts of the world, and it would be a mistake to regard them as one big, happy family. The Martiniquans regard themselves as the black princes of their race. They affect to despise the Senegalese or "jungle boys." Some of these "white negroes," West Indians and mulattoes, even go to local barbers to have their hair de-kinked.[36]

Leslie Thompson recalled his experience on tour with the 1935 all-coloured American show *Blackbirds* in Manchester, and compared it with the 1934 tour with Louis Armstrong's band.

[36] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 105.

Armstrong's band had been recruited by the African American reedist and Bricktop's ex-husband Peter DuConge in Paris and was formed mainly of four African American musicians, the Manchester born Henry Tyree on saxophone, and several musicians from the Cuban community in Paris including trombonist Lionel Guimaraes and bassist German Arago as well as the pianist Don Barreto.[37] Thompson compared the feelings he had in the two different situations when he was playing together with coloured musicians.

The performers of the *Blackbird* show went by train to Manchester with a carriage reserved for them. Thompson was the only non-American in the group, and highlighted the differences between the ways of living of Caribbean and American people:

> I was the only non-American negro. To travel with them was so foreign that I felt glad, in a sense, that no whites, no English people, were seeing it all, for the behaviour of the Americans was so inconsistent with English customs. Only a few weeks before, on the Armstrong tour, there were fellows from Puerto Rico, the USA, and Tyree from England. But it wasn't like that on the train to Manchester. The difference between the West Indian and the American was very marked, and aspects of their lives were very foreign.[38]

What Thompson underlined was the relationship with American musicians, who were surprised to meet a black man who was not American:

> The Americans were not surprised to find me in London, but they were curious to meet a fellow who belonged to them. So they waited to see – to get the first impressions. They were struck by the fact that I didn't talk American. A black Englishman – it made a difference, so our contacts were usually on the surface.[39]

[37] Armstrong and "his Harlem Hot Rhythm Band" – as the band was named for the 1933-34 tour, – recorded both in London in August 1933, and in Paris for French Brunswick in 1934. Rye, 'Towards Black British Jazz', 38.
[38] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 86.
[39] Thompson and Green, 89.

The comparison of this experience with the time when Thompson was on the Armstrong tour shows how contexts could matter with regard to feelings of belonging. Indeed, the experience during the Armstrong tour the year before was markedly different. In that case, once the musicians got to know each other and Thompson felt accepted by the group "as a brother" because their backgrounds – the ghetto and Jamaica - were considered as similar:

> It was different on the Armstrong tour; for I got to know the boys and they got to know me. They were lacking a nationalistic racial pride. They were quite humble and accepted me as a brother. It was due to the fact that we had no great ideas about ourselves. We were not striving; the Americans came from the ghetto, and they would have fitted in back in Jamaica. […] The Armstrong bus was a little Harlem. The important thing was that we were the same colour. It wasn't, the first time we met, but on the tour it became important and stayed there.[40]

It is worth underlining two elements that Thompson expressed in this extract. First, the musicians on the Armstrong tour were more opened towards him because they lacked what he described as "nationalistic racial pride," which indicates that he found this element as limiting to relationships between people, and that it could be absent in some cases, including when musicians played together. The second interesting element that emerges in the extract is that Thompson said that the bus with which they toured felt like a "little Harlem," an indication of how Harlem had become a symbol of black integration that could be used by a person living in a completely different context and who had never seen it.

The Jamaican saxophone player Louis Stephenson recalled that at that time he felt that there was no difference between black musicians from Britain and those coming from the Caribbean, and that it was the level of playing that mattered to work in good bands:

> We just knew each other as Niggers, as black people. We didn't differentiate. For the others, for white musicians, you were just a black musician. There wasn't any antagonism: if you were good enough you worked in the right bands.[41]

[40] Thompson and Green, 89.
[41] Stephenson, interview.

Stephenson added that he felt that people respected black musicians due to the American influence and because other musicians commonly thought that they had an edge on them because of their origins. Still, the reality was that "everybody was trying to be American, the English here and the West Indians in Trinidad."[42]

However, in other cases musicians could feel the difference between them linked to their origins and the way they had grown up. For instance, Leslie Thompson recalled that when in 1936 he recruited players for the band with Ken Johnson, he contacted a coloured trombonist from London, Frank Williams, whom he had met in 1931 at a party. In the end he did not become a member of the band, because he was not a jazz player, but above all he did not mix with Caribbean musicians: "he was a very home loving boy and he didn't mix, he was so very English I don't think he was comfortable with West Indians."[43]

When asked about the existence of any dislocation between people from the Caribbean and native born, the Cardiff-born guitarist Frank Deniz recalled that even if he did not feel any resentment against Caribbean people, he thought that they considered themselves as superior to anybody who was from Britain.[44] However, Deniz pointed out that when he was in a band he could not accept anybody telling him how to play unless he thought that player was better than him.

The quality and the technical level that a musician had is a recurring element to which black musicians refer when asked about their experiences with and feelings towards other black players. Frank Deniz recalled that in the 1940s after the tragic end of Ken Johnson's band everybody wanted to form a coloured band. In that period, there was pressure from agents to go in that direction, but there were few musicians with whom to do so. In Johnson's band there were young musicians and some of them were not good players in Deniz's view. He underlined that Caribbean musicians arriving in England found themselves in another environment, while he was born there, so it was different for him. In addition, few musicians could read music, and this fact made playing together harder. Deniz recalled that there was a common view that coloured musicians were all able to play well but it was not necessarily so:

[42] Stephenson.
[43] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 95.
[44] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.

> It was frustrating…when me and my brother formed our band the other musicians were white and they asked: 'why don't you employ coloured musicians?' And I answered: 'because they won't be able to play what I wanted them to play.' […] You had to fight hard to find good musicians. My idea of a coloured band was the ones I saw in Brazil with qualified musicians. When I looked for other coloured musicians I couldn't find any who were free.[45]

The reference that Deniz made to the bands that he saw in Brazil while he was working as a sailor confirms how important the background experiences were to musicians in forming their views. Interestingly, Deniz said that, after having the chance to play with white musicians, he discovered that many coloured musicians were not good players. In the context of the vogue for coloured bands, black musicians were employed even if they were not very good. The few good black musicians were always working.[46]

Among these was the English trombonist and arranger Geoff Love, son of an African American entertainer and an English actress and singer. In 1936 he was playing in a dance band in London. Love recalled that the only difference he felt between himself, a Yorkshireman, and other musicians from the Caribbean who were part of the Jamaican Leslie Hutchinson's band, was "the complete lack of discipline." For example, when they were asked to rehearse in the morning and afternoon, they said that they could not make it. Thus, the band normally did not rehearse and used to play on sight. The only time Love remembered rehearsals was when the band did the first broadcast.[47]

Like several other musicians, Geoff Love recalled that in the 1930s there were not many black musicians.[48] The trumpeter Dave Wilkins remembered that he did not meet many black people while travelling around the country, and this did not make him feel bad. The important thing for him was not being in the Caribbean anymore because he had no future prospects there:

> I suppose there were black people in the audience but I didn't really meet black people at that time. I never felt lonely or homesick, I had

[45] Deniz.
[46] Deniz.
[47] Geoff Love, interview by Val Wilmer, 16 August 1989, C122/79-80, BL NSA.
[48] Love.

> quite a good time and I never really wanted to go back to the West Indies because I've been trying to get out for years. There was nothing to Barbados, there was nothing for me there.[49]

The interesting thing is that when musicians were asked about their feelings of being black, or the importance of working with coloured musicians, in various cases the answers did not underline their racial belonging. On the contrary they asserted that they considered themselves as a person regardless of their ethnic origin and that for them it was important to play with good musicians whether they were black or not.

The context of London was not exempt from forms of racial discrimination that musicians recalled and that affected people in the music scenes. For example, there were various episodes in which black musicians were refused work or accommodation in hotels. In the case of black shows too, there were issues linked to the employment of black performers and musicians. An article published in the conservative newspaper the *Daily Express* in 1925 described how after a recent attempt to introduce a "nigger cabaret" in London had not been successful, another black company showing in Paris was offered to perform in a London club. However, the agents of the club opposed the engagement of the show, because, as one agents said, the engagement of coloured shows had often caused trouble, and therefore he objected "to coloured artists being employed where food is served to white people."[50]

Leslie Thompson recalled two circumstances in which forms of racial discrimination took place. In 1929 he was searching for work and could not find it because people did not want to employ a coloured person. He was only able to find jobs in the music business and he was scared because in that context, too, it was not easy to find employment.

> You would see faces – taking a good look at this coloured fellow. And, of course, there was no vacancy. There was little work for musicians unless you were specialised. […] I was in London, with no work. There were no jobs because of prejudice: it was the same with boarding houses – 'it's not me that is racially prejudiced, but the others mind.' I seldom met any of these 'others.' I got some work in music and other things pulled together, and I survived, but it was a really

[49] Wilkins, interview.
[50] Hannen Swaffer, "Will Tango Bands Be Barred?," *Daily Express*, (14 October 1925): 7, Press Clipping, TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR278/41/1925

> frightening time for me. There was no work, outside the entertainment and music business, for black people. Believe me, I tried.[51]

A few years later, when he was living in Bloomsbury in the mid 1930s, Thompson recalled that once he hosted a coloured trumpeter from Cuba and his daughter at his home. He could not find accommodation "because of the colour bar." A similar difficulty had been encountered by Louis Armstrong's band when they arrived in England on tour. Thompson linked this issue to the fact that British people had a "close mind:"

> It's a funny thing, but the difficulty in getting accommodation, which was written about by Dunbar in the American press, and experienced by Louis and his band, was due to the closed mind of the natives here. 'My home is my castle,' but those British who had travelled, or knew people from abroad, were quite different. The general British person had no objection to us but we didn't enter into their lives. It was the same at work. They had close links with certain friends or relatives, and everybody else was excluded. Some of the coloured lads would make friends at Trini's, and later in the clubs […], and there people were more friendly towards you. But you seldom got invited into a British home. My home is my castle, indeed.[52]

These difficulties notwithstanding, Thompson did not find the situation worrying especially when talking about it years later and comparing it to what happened after the Second World War with the mass migration from the Caribbean.

> In the 1930s race business that it is current today was not important; in fact, it didn't arise at all. You might meet the odd individual but most Britons were polite, or interested because you were black. It all changed with the influx of immigrants after the war.[53]

[51] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 59–60.
[52] Thompson and Green, 87–88.
[53] Thompson and Green, 88.

Another Jamaican player, the saxophonist Louis Stephenson, also juxtaposed the situation of the 1930s with the one after World War II and in a sense dismissed the impact of these forms of discrimination, which for him were caused by ignorance.

> Before the war there wasn't many of us here so we didn't pose a threat. You could walk wherever you wanted, there wasn't a threat apart from the little annoying things like you going for a room and people slap the door on your face, but it was because they weren't accustomed they had a supposed idea they you came from the jungle but you can't blame them it was worn by ignorance.[54]

The background that a musician had and their experience in the London music scene was crucial for their reactions to the context in which they worked.

For instance, Frank Deniz recalled that he did not feel coloured prejudice in Cardiff because he lived in a cosmopolitan area and he did not feel it, and his travelling abroad, especially the shocking experience of seeing discrimination against black people in the United States had been important for the way in which he felt the issue:

> I knew I was coloured. […] you can't hide the fact that you are black. What's the good to me trying to portray that I'm something else. It surprised them when I said I was born in Wales.

The evidence of these types of discrimination were in some cases reported to the police. For instance, two reports to the police in 1930 and 1931 contested the fact that several men had been refused to be served in a public house club, and a report of 1941 testified the fact that a hotel had refused accommodation to a man of colour.[55]

[54] Stephenson, interview.
[55] TNA, MEPO 2/7344

In 1934 Rudolph Dunbar wrote an article published in the *Melody Maker* on 19th May in which he called for black people to be fairly treated. As Stephenson, Dunbar underlined how ignorance about black people was widespread in England. When he first arrived in the country he experienced difficulties in finding a room in the West End of London, and he was able to find a room only after having put on an evening suit and top hat when doing his research. What he defined the "abyss of ignorance" did not only concern people who let houses. On the contrary, it was a general issue that affected a large number of people in England:

> The ignorance which exists among the masses in England concerning the character of the Negro is almost unbelievable. In London there are thousands of English people who are under the illusion that every black man was born in some part of Africa. […] How absurd and unreasoning is this attitude. What does Africa mean to me? Nothing whatsoever. A black man is invariably looked upon as an alien in England, despite the fact that he may hail from one of the British Colonies. Thus the black man has to fight alien prejudice as well as colour prejudice in England.[56]

It is worth noting the strength with which Dunbar affirmed that to him, Africa did not mean anything. Furthermore, he pointed to the fact that if one came from the territories of the British Empire they had to fight another form of prejudice in addition to the one linked to the colour of their skin, because even if one came from the British territories, they were considered alien.

The context of forms of racial discrimination notwithstanding, musicians' considerations are evidence that there were multiple ways in which coloured people reacted to the reality they lived in and constructed their belonging and identity. As Laurie Deniz has affirmed, being musicians allowed coloured players to be somehow exempt from discrimination.[57] In addition, it seems that in the music world, talent was more important than everything else. In this sense, building on the concept of "indifference to nation," which has been developed in the field of Central and Eastern European studies, we can talk about a form of "indifference to blackness."

[56] Rudolph Dunbar, "Adventures of a Black Man. What the Colour Bar Means to the Individual," *Melody Maker* X, no. 52 (19 May 1934): 11.
[57] Laurie Deniz, interview by Val Wilmer, 26 April 1990, C122/93, BL NSA.

The concept of "national indifference" (or "indifference to nation") refers to "forms of popular indifference to nationalist presumptions about personal and group identity," and has been developed in the context of the studies on the Habsburg Empire and its successor states. It implies a variety of ideas and behaviours which individuals, families, and communities have performed such as, for instance, multilingualism or bilingual education, but also the flexible use of the language of nation as well as the rejection of the demands of nationhood.[58] In an essay published in 2010 the historian Tara Zahra underlines the potential of national indifference as a category of analysis that "enables historians to better understand the limits of nationalization and thereby challenges the nationalist narratives, categories, and frameworks, […] without reinscribing imagined boundaries between the public (political) sphere and the private (apolitical) world of 'everyday life.'"[59]

Zahra explains that this notion builds on social and cultural histories that have devoted attention to the construction of identities, investigating issues of race, sexuality, gender and nation, but have tended to pay "less attention to individuals who remained aloof to the demands of modern identity politics."[60] Furthermore, the concept of indifference "may help social and cultural historians to better integrate the history of individuals who seem to be on the margins of elite politics into their analysis. Indifference, far from being the binary opposite of political engagement, a reflection of popular ignorance, or a premodern relic, was often a response to modern mass politics. As historians, we cannot be indifferent to the nation-state and its impact on modern history. But we can attempt to capture those moments when its grip on both the individual and society was less than absolute."[61]

Following this claim, I have found in "indifference," - in the sense that Zahra suggests which does not imply a negative connotation, - a useful analytical tool that helps me to introduce a further element of complexity in the investigation when analysing perceptions of personal belonging, especially in an inter-racial context.

The interviews of the "Oral History of Jazz in Britain" project held at the British Library have been crucial in suggesting the need to highlight a variety of perceptions of blackness. In various cases the answers given by some of the black musicians working in the London music scene regarding their perceptions of blackness reveal what I have defined as a feeling of

[58] Pieter M. Judson and Tara Zahra, 'Introduction', *Austrian History Yearbook* 43 (2012): 21.
[59] Tara Zahra, 'Imagined Non-Communities: National Indifference as a Category of Analysis', *Slavic Review* 69 (Spring 2010): 94; 97.
[60] Zahra, 109–10.
[61] Zahra, 118.

"indifference" to blackness (and nationality). This feeling was linked mainly to the fact that for them music had greater importance that went beyond racial and national issues.

When the pianist Clare Deniz was asked whether it was important for her to work with other black musicians she answered promptly that she accepted whatever was going; if she was offered a job with a white musician she took it, and added that

> We had no colour complex. Being musicians we mixed with everybody, coloured, white, everything. […] Even now I never think to myself well, I am coloured, I just treat myself as a person.

Clare Deniz recalled that there was only one time when she felt that she was a coloured person. It happened in 1958 when a race riot occurred in London: "that was the only time when I felt, well I am coloured, they must have some kind of prejudice against me, but before that I never felt anything at all." Furthermore, she was asked whether she thought of herself a Welsh person or a coloured Welsh person or other. Her answer is emblematic of her undefined feelings towards colour and nationality:

> I don't know, honestly I find I can't mix a lot with the Caribbean people, they don't really accept you because you're not born in the West Indies; the white people…I get on with them, and I get on with the coloured people if they're friendly."[62]

Her brother-in-law Joe Deniz had a more defined idea, and when he was asked whether in his youth he felt like a Welshman or coloured person, he gave a firm answer:

[62] Deniz, interview, 21 July 1989.

> I didn't feel I was anything, I just felt, well, I didn't think myself as Welsh […] I never felt that I was a Welshman, I just felt that I was me, that was it. Period.[63]

The Jamaican bassist Coleridge Goode arrived in London in 1942 and played with various jazz band there. Before that date, he had been active in the Glasgow music scene where he arrived in 1934 to study engineering through his father's connection with a professor at University of Glasgow. It was in Glasgow that he started playing the bass after years of playing the violin in order to play in jazz bands. However, Goode wanted to become a professional musician, and for this reason London was the place to which to relocate. When he arrived there he immediately found a job thanks to an encounter with the German pianist Dick Katz in a club and the piece of advice that he offered; that was the beginning of a brilliant career.[64] Answering the question whether he had the desire to play with black people, he said that it was not an issue for him. The issue was a different one:

> The issue to me was playing music and playing the best possible jazz. That to me was the important thing. I've always thought that music is a thing of harmony, it brings people together, it shouldn't separate people and this business of sort of separating white from black I've never been for that, ever. To me people are people, no matter what their colour is. So I played with anybody who liked my playing and asked me to play with them.[65]

It is worth noting that in his autobiography, Goode wrote about how important the way in which he learned music in Jamaica during his youth was for him. The time he lived on the island he was aware of the difference between blacks and whites, and of the subordinate position that Jamaicans had because of colonial domination and even if he did not feel race prejudice directly, he recognised that it was a subtle feature within Jamaican society. However, in the musical

[63] Deniz, interview, 21 July 1988.
[64] Coleridge Goode and Roger Cotterrell, *Bass Lines. A Life in Jazz* (London: Northway Publications, 2002), 16–32.
[65] Coleridge Goode, interview by Val Wilmer, 5 February 1988, C122/40, BL NSA.

world that he knew, which was linked of the musical activities of his parents, differences were blurred:

> There was a mixture of all sorts of people. Race had no bearing at all on us and we mixed with the English. My violin teacher was English and we pupils, black and white, all went to school together and were mixed there. We learned not to discriminate like that.[66]

It is worth emphasising that the experience that Goode had in learning music influenced him in his vision of music as a tool through which to transcend racial differences. This is even more significant because it occurred in a colonial context. Furthermore, this experience together with the following experiences in Glasgow, and above all, in the London music scene were crucial for forming his strong belief in the value of music as beyond racial belonging.

The answers that several black musicians gave in interviews show how, alongside forms of racial discrimination experienced in everyday life and in the entertainment circuit, the variety of perceptions of blackness included a sort of feeling of indifference to the importance of blackness (and nationality). This feeling was mainly linked to the fact that, for these musicians, music had a greater value than racial or national belonging. Therefore, it can be said that theirs was a trans-racial and transnational form of belonging, which was linked to their activity as musicians; they gave importance to music before everything else, including their perceptions of personal belonging.

In his autobiography, Goode recalled that in March 1944 he joined the all-coloured band formed by the Jamaican trumpeter Leslie 'Jiver' Hutchinson. The band started with a lot of expectations, as the bandleader had a big name in the dance music scene and some of the most outstanding Caribbean musicians were in the band, including Dave Wilkins on trumpet and Joe Deniz on guitar. In addition, the bandleader Bert Ambrose was the manager of the band. However, Goode remembered that he did not stay long with the band. The reason was that, even if the players were all good, Goode got into "other things which were musically more interesting."[67] This is an example which is worth noting because it shows how in some cases

[66] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 13.
[67] Goode and Cotterrell, 43–44.

choices that musicians made were linked to anything else but music. In that situation, it was the kind of music played and his own interest for other of musical stimuli that made Goode quit the band.

What emerges from various interviews is that the most important thing for the musicians was to play good music with good musicians, regardless of their origins. In this sense they were "indifferent" to blackness. Introducing the idea of "indifference to blackness" does not imply that they were unaware of or did not experience discrimination, that they did not place importance on their origins or did not feel differences when interacting with other black musicians (e.g. Leslie Thompson's experience on tour with American musicians). Bearing in mind the importance of personal backgrounds and experiences in the music scene, the concept of "indifference to blackness" allows me to show the complexity of perceptions of blackness giving evidence to a feeling that did not consider racial (and national) belonging as the main issue that mattered for musicians.

This is an example of how these musical connections, developed in the urban context, created a different form of belonging which transcended both racial and national issues, thus it had the power to be a form of cultural globalisation in the urban music scene, and a contribution to the internationalisation of the city. In the music scenes of London and Paris musicians adopted multiple everyday practices for performing black genres music, a process that required them to work hard as musicians and in contexts that often demanded them to be black regardless of their personal history, and to adapt to a context that was modified by a process of music commercialisation.

Describing black cultural forms, Paul Gilroy has written that one of their main features, which distinguishes them from other cultural forms, is that they are unevenly placed inside and outside conventions. This creates a form of doubleness that does not make them weak, but rather powerful:

> Their special power derives from a doubleness, their unsteady location simultaneously inside and outside the conventions, assumptions, and aesthetic rules which distinguish and periodise modernity.[68]

The impact of black genres on dance music was significant. The vogue for black styles such as blues, jazz, calypso, and beguine, helped black musicians find their space in the music scenes of both Paris and London often performing more than one genre during the same show. The *Melody Maker* in January 1935 underlined this versatility in the description of the band led by the Manchester-born saxophonist Monty Tyree which was playing at the Cuba Club in Gerrard Street: the band was "able to change itself into a real rumba outfit, a red-hot swing combination, or a genuine French tango band at will."[69]

In the context of the vogue for so-called Negro Art in the first decades of the twentieth century, the spread of African American styles of dance music profoundly influenced the demand for entertainment in Europe. African American bands and musicians found in the elegant clubs' clientele the fertile soil for the growth in popularity of black genres. The audience expectations to dance and listen to "exotic" music led entrepreneurs to present shows that emphasised exoticism, and to employ black musicians even if the demand for African American artists exceeded the supply. The practice of adhering to African American models of entertainment dated back to the nineteenth century with the spread of minstrelsy and vaudeville shows. As Howard Rye has affirmed, in the interwar years black musicians in Europe "were

[68] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 73.
[69] *Melody Maker* XI, no.88 (26 January 1935): 9.

induced into African American performance practices," conforming "to audience expectations of what they would perform" but also "participating in the avant-garde of the vernacular music of their day."[70]

The craze for dancing was central to the development of the entertainment industry in this period, and black genres were performed primarily to accompany dancing, whether in big venues or in small nightclubs. However, the spread of black genres was not uncontested. I will not examine debates on the reception of black music, but suffice it to say that, on the one hand, these genres of music, especially jazz, were associated with modernity because they came from America; on the other hand, they were associated with primitivism because of their African origin.[71] The audience that listened and danced to black genres in Paris and London was primarily white. In both cities the black population was small, and it was only in the post-war years that a specific audience for black genres formed with the arrival of a significant number of new black migrants. The absence of this "indigenous audience," as Rye has defined it, left musicians dependent for employment opportunities on commercial shows that appealed a wider audience.[72] Indeed, the vogue for black genres of music also meant the commercialisation of those styles. In both London and Paris one could listen to black music in a music-hall that featured an American revue or an American-inspired show, usually based on an orchestral version of jazz music, which had little in common with the music one could hear in the small unregistered clubs where musicians often performed various styles but also had more musical freedom and had jam sessions.

In some cases, music journals in both Great Britain and France recognised the significant black influence on dance music. For instance, in 1932 the *Melody Maker* published an article which discussed several influential black musicians who were active in Britain. The paper opened with a sentence that underlined how black artists played a crucial role in the field of dance music:

> Today, in dance music is definitely the day of the coloured man. Most of the outstanding figures in really advanced dance music are Negroes.

[70] Rye, 'Towards Black British Jazz', 23.
[71] For a reconstruction of this debate in France and Britain see, respectively: Chapter 4 of Jackson, *Making Jazz French*, 71–103; Chapter 3 of Parsonage, *The Evolution of Jazz in Britain, 1880-1935*, 35–80.
[72] Rye, 'Towards Black British Jazz', 30.

The article maintained that this was mainly due to the musical works of great American artists such as Duke Ellington and Louis Armstrong. However, even though there were not many black musicians in Britain at that time, the paper brought attention to some "outstanding figures" who had "won their way to the very top by sheer merit and ability," both American long resident in the country and people coming from colonial territories such as Rudolph Dunbar, Leslie Thompson, and Leslie Hutchinson. It is worth underlining that "merit" and "ability" were the criteria through which the article assessed the successful careers of these musicians, which were linked to their personal qualities as players and allowed them to reach high standards of performance.[73]

As the spread of black genres of music was significant, it was often described as being en vogue. However, for some musicians this had produced negative effects as Stéphane Mougin expressed in January 1932. In an article published in the journal *Jazz-Tango* the French musician criticised so-called "*négromanie*" deploring what he labelled "snobbish" attitudes that had taken the vogue for black styles of music to the extreme.

Mougin did not write against black musicians and their contribution to music. On the contrary, he recognised the greatness of several black musicians, whom he called "geniuses," and referred to black musicians in general as "brothers." He pointed to the fact that, apart from the great black stars from the United States, the majority of black musicians had jobs in the music scene which talented French musicians could secure, if it were not for the colour of their skin:

> Lorsque nous aurons, à deux, compté sur nos quatre mains, les excellents nègres des Etats-Unis, […] nous nous apercevrons, nous, musiciens nés en France, que sous l'égide de ce quarteron de couleur, une bonne centaine de négrillons sans langue maternelle précise, bouche le meilleur des places dont des musiciens de talent pourraient disposer s'ils n'avaient la mauvaise fortune d'être blancs.[74]

[73] "High-Lights on Black Subjects. Negro Culture makes its mark on London's Dance Music," *Melody Maker* VII, no. 76 (June 1932): 500-501.
[74] Stéphane Mougin, "Négromanie," *Jazz-Tango* III, no. 16 (Janvier 1932): 3.

It is worth noting that Mougin asserted that leaving aside big names, those black musicians who were active in the Parisian music scene found the best jobs precisely because they were black, regardless of their origins, which were typically ambiguous.

The Cardiff-born guitarist Frank Deniz had a similar vision regarding the opportunities that black musicians could find in the music scenes. Deniz recalled that when he arrived in London, he discovered that in the music business, being coloured was an asset because people thought that black musicians were good even if there were not many coloured musicians who could play well, and often people assumed that they were American. As there were not many guitarists in London at the time, he soon got into the circle of radio session musicians, since they assumed that he could play better rhythm guitar than white guitarists, but it was a false truth that black musicians could play better and among white musicians there were brilliant players.[75]

In the article that Mougin dedicated to the vogue of black music, he emphasised the lack of talent and skills that many black musicians who were active in the Parisian music scene had. Certain clubs in Montmartre and Montparnasse employed them only because they were born in some tropical areas or came from the slums of New York, without caring about the quality of the music that they played. As a result, the shows in those clubs were of low quality:

> Quand il vous est donné d'assister à ce lamentable spectacle de certaines boîtes de Montmartre, de Montparnasse ou d'ailleurs, où quelque quatre ou cinq malheureux illettrés de la musique, parce qu'ils sont nés sous quelque tropique – lorsqu'ils ne sont pas sortis, comme c'est plus communément la règle, de quelque bas-fond new-yorkais – de ce quatre ou cinq malheureux qui poussent des sons pénibles dans des trompettes qui leur siéent mal; quand on les voit, quêtant, d'un large sourire emprunté, les bravos et les compliments d'un public blasé et, semble-t-il, tout fier d'une semblable promiscuité, on se sent peu à peu envahi d'une tristesse indiscible.[76]

In this passage, Mougin emphasised the low level of the performances of black musicians, who were employed in some Parisian clubs of Montmartre or Montparnasse only because of they were born "somewhere in the tropics," by labelling them "bad illitterate of the music."

[75] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.
[76] Stéphane Mougin, "Négromanie," *Jazz-Tango* III, no. 16 (Janvier 1932): 3.

Furthermore, Mougin underlined a sort of a promiscuity between the musicians and an indifferent audience that applauded them regardless of their artistic value, and the extreme negative feeling that seeing the public enjoying those shows of low quality caused him.

Mougin wanted to affirm that black musicians from the United States did not have the paternity of the form of jazz that was prevalent at that time. He maintained that they played a fundamental role in the spread of certain melodic and rhythmic formulas, but he affirmed that the black contribution was limited to being the source of these formulas, as the contribution of white musicians had been crucial for the evolution of jazz:

> Les nègres des Etats-Unis n'ont pas la paternité du jazz sous la forme où nous le connaissons aujourd'hui. Il en sont par certaines formules mélodiques ou rythmiques plus ou moins la sources. Mais l'apport noir ne va pas au delà. La forme classique d'un fox-trot, la précision harmonique des modulations et l'infinie variété du "hot" sont autant de conséquences nées de l'influence des blancs et de leur science, mettons de leur civilisation.

Mougin did not accept that all the music which had been created over the previous centuries was dismissed in favour of jazz, and wondered whether the more cheerful musical parts of the genre had built on classical compositions that preceded it. He directed strong criticism against those people who drove white musicians to consider themselves less than black musicians because of their snobbery, which he defined as an illness. Thus, black musicians should not be considered masters and Mougin urged white musicians not to feel less than them, as the "malades du snobisme" induced them to do:

> Je me refuse, quant à moi, à renier l'œuvre immortelle de trois cent ans de belle musique, et je défie quiconque de prouver que le jazz n'a pas chipé les plus heureuses de ses strophes à l'art classique pur. Non! les nègres ne sont pas nos maîtres et nous ne devons pas suivre ces malades du snobisme qui nous invitent à jouer au vassal devant la troupe égarée de nos frères pigmentés.[77]

[77] Stéphane Mougin, "Négromanie," *Jazz-Tango* III, no. 16 (Janvier 1932): 3.

In March 1937 an article published in the *Melody Maker* with the title "Nigger Heaven" expressed a similar concern and discussed the idea of jazz as an exclusive right of black people. The author contested the common belief that only black people could play jazz, and wondered if any human faction had ever had priority in musical issues. Even if he believed that nationalism in music was important, in the sense that each country had certain music traditions that only their citizens could express, in the case of American music what mattered the most was the degree of cosmopolitanism that allowed American musicians to make an ideal performance of any sort of music because of their mixed origins. What gave "Negro jazz" a great advantage was its sincerity.[78]

When musicians and critics employed words such as "sincerity" to describe music produced by black musicians they usually tended to highlight that the kind of music black musicians produced seemed more genuine. In the context of early forms of the commercialisation of dance music, the issue of authenticity emerged in debates and musicians stressed its value especially with the introduction of new genres.

For instance, Frank Deniz recalled that when in the late 1930s and early 1940s Latin music started to become popular, many musicians wanted to play those styles but they did not know genres such as *samba* or *rumba*, with the result that the music played in shows did not have much in common with authentic Latin genres, and became an "exhibition number:"

> When they got the music here it became an exhibition number, they found that Latin music must be fast. [...] When we started to play Latin music, they were surprised and ask me how I did that, and I said: 'Because I've heard it.' They had no idea that I'd been a sail man.[79]

This passage shows the big difference that Deniz perceived between a commercialised version of Latin music that many musicians in England had superficially adopted – the only specific trait they had found was being "fast," – and the version of Latin music that he

[78] Stanley Nelson, "Nigger Heaven," *Melody Maker* XIII, no. 260 (20 March 1937): 5.
[79] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.

performed which surprised listeners because it was different from what it was commonly known as Latin music in the country. This difference derived from the fact that Deniz had listened and learned Latin genres of music first-hand when he worked as a sailor and travelled to South America. His background was at the basis of his capacity of performing styles of music that people did not know in London and that surprised them.

However, Deniz' experience shows that this was not always the case. A few years later he formed his own band which played at the Coconut Grove Club in the West End of London. They started to play Brazilian music but they were then asked to change the style and play a type of music that was better known to the public:

> I found that I couldn't get at the dancing public because we were playing rhythms that they didn't understand. I spoke to somebody and they say 'why don't be a bit more commercial?,' and I realised that I could vary the type of music that I play and take music of Latin America, and the Caribbean, and Spain and devise a program on that assumption that Latin music is played all over the world.[80]

This example shows how musicians had to adapt to the demand of the public. As we can assume from this passage, Deniz realised that the Brazilian music the band presented - an "authentic" Latin style, - was unknown to the dancing public in London, therefore he decided to introduce a variety of Latin styles in the repertoire.

New styles of music that arrived onto the music scenes often underwent a musical transformation in the new contexts in order to appeal to the audience. Several musicians and critics contested the lack of authenticity that the music in the new contexts had. This happened especially in the case of jazzy styles of music arriving from America.

In 1931 Stéphane Mougin wrote an article about jazz music for the review *Jazz-Tango* in which he affirmed that in France, a true form of jazz did not exist: American musicians had imposed themselves and French musicians playing jazz lived in their shadow. Moreover, the latter had confined their playing to the replication of jazz musical forms without absorbing and expressing the true spirit of the music, and had used those forms for commercial purposes:

[80] Deniz.

> Les musiciens de jazz français ne sont que de pales reflets de ces nouveaux romantiques d'Amérique. S'ils se sont appliqués à en reproduire les formules musicales, ils n'en ont ni l'*esprit* ni le cœur. Cependant, à la faveur du mot "jazz," ils ont exploité pendant de longues années, après la guerre, la badauderie populaire. Chez les musiciens français de jazz, c'est le besoin de commerce, d'argent, qui les a conduits à rechercher des formules nouvelles propres à bluffer et à abuser de la musique de jazz.[81]

It is worth underlining that the words "spirit" and "heart" referred to American musical forms and stood in contrast with the "need for commerce," and the "need for money" that Mougin thought were at the basis of the replication of those forms, and in general, of the exploitation of jazz by French musicians. This way he underlined how the process of commercialisation could influence musicians in the process of appropriation of new musical forms.

In his autobiography Charles Delaunay noticed this lack of authenticity in his reconstruction of the diffusion of jazz in Europe. He pointed to the lack of knowledge that people had about jazz when it first arrived on the continent. This was evident when one examined the different meanings that the very term jazz had over time in France: initially it designated the drum set, then the whole band, and later all the styles of dance music arriving from the United States after the First World War. While these genres became very popular, however Delaunay noticed that the vogue was based on a total ignorance of the real characteristics of those styles of music, even in the case of great composers such as Ravel and Stravinsky who were profoundly influenced by them but lacked knowledge of their authentic manifestations. The result was that what was known as jazz in France became the commercialised music for dancing, which originated in the area of Tin Pan Alley in New York - an area of Manhattan where music publishers and songwriters of popular music had their base of operation. Delaunay affirmed that it was only after the economic crisis, started with the Wall Street crash of 1929, that the first forms of authentic jazz began to be heard in Europe. Still, it was offered to "unprepared ears," and was immediately rejected both by the public and the critics.[82]

[81] Stephane Mougin, "De la Musique de Jazz," *Jazz-Tango* II, no. 10 (Juillet 1931): 14-15.
[82] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 47–50.

This lack of authenticity was considered by several musicians and critics a more general issue regarding a large part of music production in those years. For instance, in an article published in the *Melody Maker* in March 1935, Spike Hughes, under his pseudonym "Mike," made an assessment of the first four years in which he wrote about jazz records.

The great music created over the previous years had been produced by those musicians who possessed what Hughes called "colour." It is interesting to note that he used the word "colour" as one of the main features that made people create great music, but he specified that it did not relate to the colour of the skin, but to what he labelled as "instrumental colour." The main aspect Hughes wanted to underline about recently produced jazz was that he found a "monotonous colour," with sounds that did not differ much from one another:

> The outstanding sounds of jazz have been produced by just those artists who have a sense of colour, of tone variation […] who have been able to invent, with only the regulation orchestra, new sounds and new tone colours. […] Looking back over the near-four years during which I have taken a professionally critical interest in jazz, I find that my mind is a blur of monotonous colour – trumpets, trombones, clarinets, saxophones, pianos, record after record, sounding the same. Here and there like lighthouses in a vast ocean there stand out The Exceptions.

The "exceptions" were big names such as Duke Ellington, Benny Carter, and Fletcher Henderson. The majority of composers had not succeeded in standing out in the music scene, and conformed to the style of the great stars, thus adding nothing of their own in the music world:

> For the rest, colours that for a moment seemed distinctive have faded into nothing through overinsistence. […] These fading colours have mingled and run into the distinctive colours of The Exceptions so much that unless the eye is keen the whole of jazz is in retrospect nothing more or less than A Mess like a stage band backcloth.[83]

[83] "Colour…orchestral and otherwise…" *Melody Maker* XI, no. 93 (2 March 1935): 13.

The harsh words that Hughes wrote about the latest production of jazz music are interesting because they reveal that critics who were also musicians - as was the case of Hughes - consider authenticity as one of the most important elements which should characterise music. Authenticity in music meant that musicians should express themselves through music and search to innovate the field. This discourse was also related to quality in music, and in the case of jazz it meant dealing with a style of music arriving from outside national borders. Therefore, those musicians and critics who wrote about authenticity and quality in jazz often had to cope with accusations that they promoted foreign music at the expense of the music produced within national borders.

In another article published in the *Melody Maker* in December 1936, Hughes responded to the claims that he persistently boosted foreign musicians, who were often considered above the English standard even if the journal was a British newspaper. Hughes began the piece by clarifying that the *Melody Maker*'s main contents were linked to music that was not British in its origin, and the magazine paid special attention to black musicians from the United States. The motive behind this choice was that readers wanted to read about that kind of music. The journal catered for its public and "the fan is the public," Hughes wrote. Moreover, the reason the journal devoted a large amount of space to American jazz musicians was linked to the quality of the music produced. "Do let us all – once and for ever – admit that the Americans produce better jazz than the British," Hughes affirmed. Although the journal had recognized the mark that British musicians had in jazz, it was necessary to acknowledge that through the years the British contribution to jazz had been small and of little importance compared to the American contribution. To clarify, Hughes asserted that there was not one piece of British jazz he would choose to listen at the expense of the music of great American stars:

> It's nice to have British jazz, but if I had to choose between the best of the old world and the best of the new, there are no two ways about it. […] There can be no British jazz – only a British translation of American music.

For Hughes, English musicians should produce dance music that was not simply an adaptation of another form of music originating abroad, but should be the result of originality and he concluded prophetically:

> When the English produce typical English dance music again – it must be nearly 350 years since they last did it – it will be a music all its own. And then we'll have a 50-page paper every week.[84]

Even if Hughes did not specify what the characteristics of "typical English dance music" were, he insisted on the need to create music that was original and that reflected the context in which it was created.

Jules Stein - the founder of the music booking agency Music Corporation of America - gave a similar judgment about the British music scene. Stein was the director of the corporation's British Section and was therefore familiar with the development of British music. For Stein the main problem that affected English bands was that they lacked musical personality. The use of similar arrangements by different bands and the work of freelance arrangers were the main reasons that led to "mediocrity and confusion to the public." In addition, the habit of bandleaders of employing additional musicians for broadcasting or recording, revealed the belief that any good musician could fit with any band without difficulty and often with very little or no rehearsal. However, this would be very hard if bands had really different styles because only a few musicians were talented enough to be able to move from one band to another adopting a different style for each band. "With so many bands sounding uniformly alike," Stein wondered why different bandleaders hadn't been "more inspired to create something different for themselves by employing a greater use of their individual imaginations." The only reason that he considered an explanation for this, was the lack of competition in the music scene, unlike what happened in the United States where there had been a high level of competition. It was widely claimed that the public of the West End of London was "a one-tempo audience," therefore bands had to keep time with the dancers who had the ability to dance at only one

[84] "Discoursing on Jazz in General, "Mike" Justifies his PRO-AMERICAN and PRO-NEGRO POLICY, *Melody Maker* XII, no. 188 (26 December 1936): 5.

tempo. Even if Stein agreed with the public's definition, the idea that the perceived problem around the lack of musical personality lay with the public left him unconvinced:

> Granted that the English dancer is a one-tempo-minded individual, and I maintain that he is, it still doesn't follow that plenty can't be accomplished with this one tempo, and within it. […] I agree emphatically with all who realise that radically to try to woo the dancing public, especially those dancers who make up the denizens of the smarter and more expensive clubs, would be inviting disaster with open arms. Yet, to use this as an excuse for monotonous unindividualized music is to be very short-sighted in exploiting potential possibilities.

For Stein, if British bands differed in style as much as bands in the United States, the public would become "increasingly band-conscious," and this would result, in turn, in each band building up an increasing demand for itself, while simultaneously helping out other bands. The idea that competitive bands helped each other might have been considered a fairy-tale, but Stein invited readers to realise that this materialised if "the public could no longer justifiably say 'after you have heard one, you have heard all.'"[85]

Attention on the public was another recurring element in this debate. In March 1937 Spike Hughes, under the pseudonym "Mike," harshly criticised the taste of the British public in article in the *Melody Maker*:

> The taste of the British public is unaccountable. If the Average Listener had his way, the air would be filled with ditties about cowboys sung by young gentlemen who have rarely been any further west than Aldgate Pump.

Hughes affirmed that what was occurring at the time was the construction of "commonness:" the creation of a common mind unable to think for itself, and ashamed of its ignorance which it tried to hide by detracting from everything it was unable to understand. This common mind,

[85] Jules Stein, "British Bands Have No Individuality," *Melody Maker* XIII, no. 194 (6 February 1937): 3-4.

Hughes continued, was at the basis of modern popular music, and was expressed nightly on the radio, with the result that there was nothing authentic about it. Moreover, this was not a specific development affecting music in Britain, but rather, part of a more general trend occurring in other parts of the world, too, including the United States:

> There is nothing genuine about the whole thing, it is cheap and nasty. Don't think that this country is alone in this. It is just as bad in America – worse if anything – except that the individual musicians are more professional, less *parvenu* than they are here.[86]

In *Art Worlds*, Howard Becker writes that the standardisation of products results from what the system of a cultural industry finds convenient to handle rather than from any independent choice made by the maker of an art work.[87] The process of commercialisation that new genres of music experienced when they spread within the music scenes, was at least in part governed by those who operated in several strategic locations of the system, such as radio.

As the accusation of transmitting popular music with a "common mind" made by Hughes suggested, radio played a significant role in the commercialisation of dance music. From the mid 1920s the BBC provided its public with dance music presented as a form of leisure which was respectable and British. Founded on 18th October 1922 and located in the Strand, the area of Central London alongside the north bank of the river Thames, the British Broadcasting Company had a monopoly to broadcast in Great Britain. As Christina Baade has stated "through radio, dance music for the elites transformed into a common cultural entertainment."[88] The transmission of popular music necessitated a work of negotiation between the BBC and the various actors in the music industry such as publishers, agents, song pluggers and bandleaders, who worked on songs as products addressed to a mass-audience. This commercial aspect was the basis of the ambivalent place that popular music occupied within the BBC, mainly because of the policy that the institution adopted since the early days of its foundation, which can be

[86] "'Mike,' Our Critic-at-Large, continuing with 'Dislikes' wonders Are Their Faces Red?" *Melody Maker* XIII, no. 260 (20 March 1937): 5.
[87] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 128.
[88] Christina L. Baade, *Victory through Harmony: The BBC and Popular Music in World War II* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 28.

summarised with the expression "to entertain, to interest, to enlighten" that the Director-General John Reith used in March 1924.[89]

I will not analyse in detail the evolution of the history of the BBC and its policy during the 1920s and 1930s, but I want to point briefly to the fact that the early administrators of the BBC conceived its functions not merely in terms of providing entertainment of good quality but also of educating the public. Indeed, high standards and education would become consistent elements in the policy of the BBC.[90] However, this line of thought had a precise meaning with regard to what entertaining and educating meant. In this respect, Reith wrote that the basis of broadcasting was the cooperation between people who worked to give relaxation to the public and the "discoverers of the intellectual forces which are moulding humanity," who showed that listeners could not only occupy time "agreeably" but also "well."[91] Regarding dance music, the transmission of live broadcasts from elegant nightclubs, hotels and restaurants in the West End guaranteed the high level of quality of the bands broadcast, but at the same time it served to promote forms of dance music distinct from jazz, which were associated with African American "primitivism" and illegal clubs in underground urban areas.[92]

The introduction of new types of music in general, and of genres such as jazz and swing in the case of dance music in particular, caused concern amongst BBC programme builders. In the mid 1930s not only was the policy of the BBC challenged with requests to promote British composers and musicians, but also high-level administrators conveyed the idea that programme designers should consider programme popularity as a significant factor during creation. In the case of popular music, this also implied an attention to new genres of music that were popular in those years, such as jazz. However, several BBC staff members pushed for the promotion of new musical developments, while others considered new forms of music carefully.[93] For instance, the director of entertainments R.H. Eckersley expressed clear aversion towards jazz

[89] In March 1924 in an article published in the *Radio Times*, the journal founded in September 1923 with programme listings, articles, and introductions to programmes, Reith wrote that the policy of the BBC was: "to entertain, to interest, to enlighten, in all these ways to bring the very best of everything and to spare no effort to do it, to the greatest number; to aim always at the highest standards in every line of achievement in whatever direction it may lie." J.C.W. Reith, "What is Our Policy?", *Radio Times*, 2 (14 March 1924): 442

[90] Several scholars have explored the history of British broadcasting and the policy of the BBC in the first decades after its foundation: Asa Briggs, *The History of Broadcasting in the United Kingdom. Volume I: The Birth of Broadcasting* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Crisell, *An Introductory History of British Broadcasting*; Jennifer Ruth Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music, 1922-1936: Shaping a Nation's Tastes* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Valeria Camporesi, *Mass Culture and National Traditions: The BBC and American Broadcasting, 1922-1954* (Fucecchio: European Press Academic Publishing, 2000); Baade, *Victory through Harmony*.

[91] John C. W. Reith Reith, *Broadcast over Britain* (London: Hodder and Stoughton, 1924), 18.

[92] Baade, *Victory through Harmony*, 18–19; 24.

[93] Doctor, *The BBC and Ultra-Modern Music*, 292.

that arrived from the United States. In December 1933, he wrote a memorandum addressed to the Director-General of the BBC in which he outlined how, over the previous years there had been a decline in the number of broadcasts of so-called "hot jazz" from the studio, and an increase in broadcasts of dance music from other European countries, particularly from France. As a result, what he defined "music of the Ellington-Armstrong type" had nearly disappeared from programmes. Eckersley clarified that he did not oppose musically interesting arrangements that bandleaders orchestrated to avoid repetition and meet the taste of many jazz fans. Indeed, programme builders were "trying to meet a variety of tastes in the best possible way," thereby finding a balance between broadcasting what people liked and their ideas about what good music meant. However, at the same time he specified that there was "no sympathy" for what he defined "negroid type of music."[94]

Commercial radios from abroad broadcasted British dance bands and dance bands found it convenient to broadcast with these stations because there were fewer regulations and payment was higher. In the mid 1930s, radio agents recorded programmes in London that were sent abroad to commercial stations with the result that in the late 1930s, the music of popular bands was transmitted both on the BBC and on commercial stations in other European countries, particularly in France. French radio developed differently, and France was the only Western country where public and commercial stations coexisted in the first decades of radio development. I will not examine the history of radio in France in depth but it is worth noting that after the end of the First World War, the state granted private stations concessions for broadcasting, and it was only in 1928 that the creation of further commercial stations was banned. Thus, commercial stations created before that date functioned alongside state-run networks, and were mostly concentrated in Paris and other industrial centres in the northern part of the country. In the early 1930s, the French government developed a plan to create a state radio network to generate full complete coverage over the French territory with French signals, which in 1934 led to the purchase of the commercial station Radio-Paris, which later that became France's national station.[95]

[94] BBC WAC/R19/585/1

[95] Several scholars have analysed the history of French radio in the early stages of its development in the 1920s and 1930s: Christian Brochand, *Histoire générale de la radio et de la télévision en France: 1921-1944*, vol. 1 (Paris: La Documentation française, 1994); Cécile Méadel, *Histoire de la radio des années trente. Du sans-filiste à l'auditeur* (Paris: Anthropos/INA, 1994); Jean-Jacques Cheval, *Les radios en France: histoire, état et enjeux* (Rennes: Apogée, 1997); Joelle Neulander, *Programming National Identity: The Culture of Radio in 1930s France* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2009); Rebecca P. Scales, *Radio and the Politics of Sound in Interwar France, 1921–1939* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016).

The development of the radio as a mass medium was less immediate in France compared to other countries, including Britain. However, several composers active in France did not consider the spread of music through radio broadcast positively. Among these was Igor Stravinsky, who in an article published in 1936 in the radio magazine *Mon Programme*, labelled the substitution of real performance with the reproduction of a musical work, whether through records, films or radio broadcasts, a "mensonge musical," a musical lie. Moreover, in the explanation of this idea he referred to authenticity. For Stravinsky, there was a danger that an increasing consumption of imitations instead of what he defined authentic music would result in people unlearning natural musical sound.

> Ici il y a la même différence qu'entre l'*ersatz* et l'authentique. Le danger réside précisément dans le fait d'une consommation toujours plus grande de cet *ersatz* qui, - ne l'oublions pas, - est encore bien loin de présenter une identité absolue avec son modèle. L'habitude continue d'écouter les timbres altérés et parfois défigurés abime l'oreille, laquelle désapprend ainsi à jouir du son musical naturel.[96]

In the 1930s music occupied a large amount of the airtime. Both private and public stations played popular music. The majority of private radio airtime featured the latest popular songs, and private stations were able to offer exclusive contracts to the biggest stars through advertising. Public stations had direct ties with national theatres and orchestras, and transmitted more classical selections but also light music.[97] Charles Delaunay recalled that the first programme that broadcast jazz music regularly was transmitted in 1931 by Radio L.L., a small Parisian private radio, which was followed two years later by another Parisian private radio, Poste Parisien, which hosted a jazz programme presented by the music agent Jacques Canetti.[98] In 1935 Radio Cité, the station that replaced Radio L.L. under the ownership of Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, broadcasted programmes dedicated to the presentation of records recently released in France, including jazz records. Bleustein-Blanchet asked a young record collector

[96] Igor Stravinsky "Grandeurs et dangers de la musique radiodiffusée," *Mon Programme* V, no. 214 (21 February 1936): 3.
[97] Méadel, *Histoire de la radio des années trente*, 313–29; Neulander, *Programming National Identity*, 38–39.
[98] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 58; 217.

who worked in a record store to create those programmes, which he accepted in exchange for the transmission of advertisements for his business.[99]

Seeing an opportunity to make money with radio advertising, the son of Jewish immigrant shopkeepers working in Paris, Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, had founded the advertising company Publicis in 1929. In the 1930s the firm created an advertising network and concluded contracts with various French stations. It was the ban on advertising on public radio established in 1935 that made Bleustein-Blanchet acquire a radio station.[100] The success of Radio Cité was mainly due to financial support from firms that invested in the station. Radio Cité was the first stations to broadcast game shows and soap operas, but it also allocated space to new music with the "Le Music-Hall des Jeunes," a programme aimed at promoting young French artists, giving them the chance to perform before an audience that voted for the performers and designated as the best artist during each session.[101]

In the book that he dedicated to the creation of the station, Bleustein-Blanchet explained that Radio Cité was subject to the critique of both its clients and its audience. Pleasing the audience was crucial for him, and he firmly opposed the idea of a radio station that did not take external judgments into consideration and which was subjugated to the will of a single man:

> Nous avons toujours été soumis à une double critique de l'auditeur et du client. Que penser, par contre, d'une radio qui n'a cure d'aucun jugement! Sans vouloir attaquer quiconque, comment admettre la dictature d'un homme qui, placé d'un côté de la barricade, n'agit qu'a son gré ou à celui de ses amis, parents ou relations […]. Il faut être en contact constant avec l'auditeur pour savoir ce qui lui plaît.[102]

In those early years, listeners could tune into to foreign programmes, and several French commercial stations created broadcasts for listeners in other countries, including Britain. These stations took advantage of the ban that the BBC imposed on commercial advertising by signing contracts with British firms to sponsor evening programmes of jazz and dance records. Moreover, some of them competed with the BBC, employing radio announcers from Britain on

[99] Marcel Bleustein-Blanchet, *Sur Mon Antenne* (Paris: Éditions Défense de la France, 1948), 36.
[100] Neulander, *Programming National Identity*, 27–33.
[101] Bleustein-Blanchet, *Sur Mon Antenne*, 65–68.
[102] Bleustein-Blanchet, 74.

weekends for programmes featuring dance music, while the restrictions on programmes did not allow the BBC to transmit dance music on Sundays. Thus, listeners both in France and in Britain listened to these programmes, and in general, live jazz from elegant London hotels received rave reviews in the press.[103]

The spread of commercial broadcasting stimulated debates on the ways in which, especially lower classes amused themselves, as they often preferred programmes with games shows, comedy sketches or popular music to state-run radio programmes of that had more sophisticated cultural content. Many composers and elite critics blamed foreign influences for this change, especially those originating in America, and pointed to the necessity to educate the public to listen to music. For instance in 1932, the composer Maurice Emmanuel affirmed that while music through radio and records had spread everywhere, listeners were not able to acknowledge its quality.[104]

In his article published in 1936 in *Mon Programme*, the composer Igor Stravinsky affirmed that understanding music required an active effort, because passive reception did not imply any actual understanding. Radio and records had reduced the active participation of the public, and this "progressive paralysis" could have severe consequences, namely a degeneration which in the context of an overexposure to sounds made people indifferent to the quality of the music that they listened to:

> Sursaturés de sons, blasés sur leurs combinaisons les plus variées, les gens tombent dans une sorte d'abrutissement qui leur enlève toute capacité de discernement et les rend indifférents à la qualité même des morceaux qu'on leur sert. Il est plus que probable qu'une pareille suralimentation désordonnée leur fera bientôt perdre l'appétit et le goût de la musique.[105]

This issue concerned especially people of low social level, who were not able to discern their own tastes, and Stravinsky expressed his concern that new developments in radio and records would not instil love and understanding of music.

[103] Baade, *Victory through Harmony*, 29–30; Scales, *Radio and the Politics of Sound*, 120–25.
[104] Cited in Scales, *Radio and the Politics of Sound*, 174.
[105] Igor Stravinsky "Grandeurs et dangers de la musique radiodiffusée," *Mon Programme* V, no. 214 (21 February 1936): 3.

In the mid 1930s, the success of broadcasts transmitted on commercial radio – which, in the case of Britain were foreign - was one of the factors that contributed to an increase in the attention that programme builders drew to listeners' habits and tastes. This was at the basis of the introduction of swing music in BBC programming. Swing remained a minority taste in Britain until the end of the 1930s and gained popularity among mass audience during the Second World War. In the mid 1930s swing was considered as a musical form addressed to a restricted public of listeners, as the majority of listeners in Britain preferred more traditional strict-tempo dance music. However, the influence of American swing made an increasing number of musicians in Britain adopt the style of American swing bands, as was the case of Ken Johnson's band.[106]

In 1937 the action of young members of the BBC Gramophone Department was crucial to the first broadcasts of swing music in a specific series of programmes transmitted regularly each week. In these swing series presentations supplemented the recordings giving listeners information about the artists and the records transmitted, and, in cooperation with the BBC North American representative and the Columbia Broadcasting System, they transmitted several live broadcasts of swing from the United States called "America Dances."

Among the creators of the swing series was Harman Grisewood who on 4th June 1937 wrote an internal memorandum in which he made an assessment of the first six months of broadcasted swing. This report is interesting because it reveals the ideas that members of the BBC had about the introduction of new genres of music that were popular among audiences.

Grisewood maintained that the motive behind the choice of creating swing music programmes was to "inculcate a standard of taste and appreciation for 'quality' in jazz." Quality meant that the programmes provided "musically interesting jazz," "a high standard of performance," and "a technique that is in accordance with the original jazz tradition."[107] Grisewood distinguished three types of jazz: "Negro jazz," the music that black musicians played for a black audience, seen as a natural and emotional expression which had changed from its original form; "sophisticated jazz," played by jazz bands for wealthy people; and "jazz for the people," popularised by records and radio. Moreover, he explained that broadcasted music came from America by relay or records, because, apart from a few exceptions, that level of quality was not obtainable either in England or in other European countries.

[106] Baade, *Victory through Harmony*, 31–32.
[107] BBC WAC/R27/71/2, Broadcast Dance Music (4 June 1937): 1-2

According to Grisewood, it was essential that the audience should be able to listen to good music. Therefore, it was necessary that the supervision of dance music programmes was less concerned with determining if bands respected agreements with music publishers or restrictive rules framed by the BBC, and that it evaluated the talent of bands in order to reach a uniform standard of quality. Moreover, Grisewood maintained that at that time bandleaders often played just what was popular because the BBC did not make them pay attention to the quality of the music which they submitted. Popularity, however, could not be the standard:

> Mere popularity cannot be our standard; we want good tunes and good playing. We do not want a dance band session to exfoliate into a variety act. […] A good deal of the degenerate, sentimental, rubbishy songs could be expunged from programmes if we invite the band leaders to conform to principles of taste and performance that we clear about ourselves. At present a dance music programme tends to become a sequence of vague emotional stimuli rather than a programme of music.[108]

The language that Grisewood used to describe certain types of music such as the adjectives "degenerate" and "rubbishy" is an indication of the importance given to what he deemed to be good music. In addition, it is worth noting that he underlined the need to conform to principles of taste and performance, the BBC should clearly indicate. For that purpose, he called for the formation of a dance band section within the corporation in order to adopt a deliberate dance policy, which could accomplish the goal that was at the basis of swing broadcasts: "an enlightened discrimination over the whole field of dance music." This "enlightened discrimination" should be directed against what he labelled a "vogue of emotional stimuli" that was permeating music. The reference was to the kind of sentimental songs that were commercialised in those years.[109]

The introduction of new genres of music did not find the complete support of the listening public. For some listeners, the introduction of swing was a negative development. Among these was Stanley Pearson, a civil engineer, who wrote a letter to the BBC's Director-General Frederick Ogilvie on 14th July 1941 in which he asked the reason why jazz and swing were

[108] BBC WAC/R27/71/2, Broadcast Dance Music (4 June 1937): 5-6
[109] See Chapter 6 of Baade, *Victory through Harmony*, 130–52.

broadcasted so often. Pearson added that a lot of people agreed with him in opposing what he called "music-murder," and if the motives behind this kind of broadcasting were linked to the tastes of young people he suggested that they should be educated above it. On 26th July 1941 Ogilvie answered to Mr. Pearson. He expressed the belief that excluding jazz and swing was not fair to the public and underlined how the BBC maintained the aim of educating people; an objective that over the previous two decades had produced positive results with an increased appreciation of "good" music.[110]

On the part of musicians, the choice between playing commercialised or more authentic styles of music could have an impact on their music careers. For instance, when Frank Deniz recalled the experience of his own band performing Brazilian music in the 1940s, he recollected that he wanted to form a Brazilian band because it was a novelty in the music scene of London. Deniz affirmed that the choice was not based on money but on the fact that they liked what they played. However, it was difficult to convince BBC producers to give space to them even if they recognised that the band presented something different. The issue of authenticity emerged in the words that Deniz used to describe the attitude that BBC producers had towards certain "authentic" genres of music. Although they accepted that they were "more or less an authentic band", they could not deal with it musically. In addition, the competition against more commercial type of Latin music that bands such as Edmundo Ros' presented, was high, and so they tried to attract the audience by creating an appealing atmosphere and caring about their image and how they dressed in their shows. The decline of the vogue for Latin music eventually led Deniz to disperse the group and started playing more commercial music.[111]

As the experience of Deniz shows, musicians - or at least some of them - had to balance the need of self-expression through music, with a reality linked to the commercialisation of music. Creating music for a mass audience faced the fact that very large audiences are unpredictable, despite the efforts of market researchers, because, as Howard Becker has explained: "no one knows with any assurance what conventions this mass audience appreciates and accepts, what class or professional artistic cultural understandings might inform their choices."[112]

In the 1930s, attention drawn to audience taste increased especially among radio programme builders. This meant that musicians could be asked to change what they played and perform different styles of music that were more popular. In addition, the vogue for black genres of

[110] BBC WAC/R41/113/1
[111] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.
[112] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 123.

music made coloured musicians who were less talented find jobs, responding to the demands of an emerging market driven by the commercialisation of those genres. This was at the basis of the critique that several musicians expressed. In opposition to this way of conceiving and making music, characterised by a lack of musical talent and sensitivity that the process of commercialisation had brought, they emphasised the need for authenticity in music and the search for self-expression through it. Being a musician at the early stages of commercialisation meant finding a balance between the artistic value of music as well as personal expressive needs, and a reality in which the career success was linked to the mechanisms of the emerging music industry, to which musicians were asked to adapt, to deal with continual changing conditions.

In the music scenes of London and Paris, black musicians were required a high degree of versatility as they had to perform various genres, often in the same show. In this chapter the analysis of practices of learning has allowed me to show how many black musicians in the music scenes learned different styles to be able to perform in those contexts. Among the different practices that they adopted, informal ways of learning (e.g. through records or through direct contacts between players for instance in jam sessions) were fundamental for their professional training. Furthermore, in the chapter I have given attention to several musicians arrived from the Caribbean, who wrote articles (Rudolph Dunbar and Marino Barreto) and books (Edmundo Ros) published in British and French musical journals, underlining their relevance as examples of the crucial role that they, as colonial subjects, played in the transmission of musical knowledge in the two cities.

In both contexts, it was the commercialisation of black genres of music that led musicians to play this variety of genres. This was linked to the vogue for black forms of art and the demand for black musical performances that a primarily white audience had. In a social context of racial discrimination which black musicians experienced, but which was not at the centre of the analysis, - the presentation of black music tended to reinforce stereotypical ideas of blackness within a process of commercialisation of dance music. Within this framework I have underlined how musicians constructed their personal belonging and perceptions of blackness in different ways, due to their origins, backgrounds and experiences. The concept of "indifference to blackness" that I have adapted from studies on nationalism in the Hasburg Empire, has been a useful tool for introducing a further element of complexity in the analysis of perceptions of

blackness regarding a specific group of musicians in a mixed context. This notion has allowed me to define a feeling of "indifference to blackness" that several musicians expressed, linked to the belief that music and talent had greater importance than racial and national belongings.

As Howard Rye has written, hearing genuine African-American material was a central motif in European reactions to African-American music and dance for at least a century (starting with minstrelsy shows in the nineteenth century).[113] This element was at the basis of the commercialisation of black genres of music, in this process the concept of "authenticity" was central in several musicians' views. For instance, Frank Deniz experience of going more commercial because the audience did not understand his more authentic version of Latin music reveal the significance of this duality between commercial/authentic in musicians' careers in dance music.

Native musicians such as Mougin and Hughes strongly criticised the way popular music was conceived or made, usually characterised by lack of musical talent and sensitivity, that the process of commercialisation used to entice the audience. In opposition to this, they emphasised the need for "authenticity" in music and the search for self-expression through it. In this process, radio broadcasting had a significant value, and the debates on the introduction of new styles of music in programmes reveal a contested reception of dance music, especially swing. It is worth noting that young members of the BBC were responsible for the introduction of swing in the late 1930s.

The vogue for black music especially from America and its commercialisation had a deep impact on dance music and on the entertainment industry, and had consequences on the ways in which musicians and authorities reacted to the arrival of foreign genres of music and foreign performers.

[113] Rye, 'Towards Black British Jazz', 24.

Chapter 5

Regulating Change: Processes of Negotiation in the Music Scenes and the Intervention of the State

Art worlds change continuously –
sometimes gradually, sometimes quite dramatically.
New worlds come into existence, old ones disappear.
No art worlds can protect itself fully or for long
against all the impulses for change, whether they arise
from external sources or internal tensions.
[…] Only change that succeed
in capturing existing cooperative networks
or developing new ones survive.[1]
Howard S. Becker
Art Worlds
(1982)

The spread of black genres of music generated profound changes in music at the international level, and also had repercussions at the local level, such as in the case of the urban music scenes of Paris and London. States play a role of fundamental importance in the music scenes, especially through their attempts to regulate change when it occurs. In the exploration of music scenes, this brings with it the ways in which national perspectives of analysis can be included in the investigation. The sociomusicologist Simon Frith has challenged the idea of the prominence of the national perspective in studies on music:

> In the music industry (as elsewhere in media analysis) once we start tracing the networks which sustain its economy, it becomes clear that while it is relatively easy to describe a local music industry and a global music industry, it is extremely difficult to describe a national music industry. […] The nation seems unimportant in structuring music networks, and the research issue becomes the relationship of music policies (mostly conceived at national level in terms of national

[1] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 300–301.

> regulation, protection, taxation, access, identity, branding, training, etc.) and music practices (not 'national' in any obvious sense at all).[2]

However, this reasoning does not imply the exclusion of the national dimension. On the contrary, Frith underlines how and when the level of analysis in the music field becomes national, it is relevant to show in which ways policies adopted by governments deal with the production of music:

> Live music promotion significantly involves the state and thus political decisions. This is partly a matter of regulation - promoters have to take account drink and entertainment licensing laws and health and safety requirements […] - but also because there are a range of government policies that do not concern music but nevertheless have consequences for its performance, for example, planning and transport policy, immigration acts, and the various measures concerning the sale and consumption of alcohol.[3]

As Howard Becker maintains in his book *Art Worlds*, the role of states in the making of an art work is crucial because they "have a monopoly over making laws within their own borders." The actions that states take are subordinated to the interests that they pursue: "like other participants in the making of art works, the state and its agents act in pursuit of their own interests, which may or may not coincide with those of the artists making the works."[4] Becker has clarified that the interests that are at the basis of the intervention of the state in the arts are connected to the "preservation of public order" and the "development of a national culture".[5]

In the cases of London and Paris, laws enacted by the central government for the maintenance of public order tended to be directed only at the capitals. Two special police units controlled the two cities, the Préfecture de Police in Paris and the Metropolitan Police in London, and various measures concerning the regulation of places of entertainment in the two

[2] Simon Frith, 'Music Industry Research: Where Now? Where Next? Notes from Britain', *Popular Muisc* 19, no. 3 (2000): 391.
[3] Frith, 'Live Music Exchange', 298.
[4] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 165.
[5] Becker, 180.

capitals differed from what governments established in the neighbouring municipalities and in other regions in each country.

The spread of black genres of music and their performance in clubs in specific areas of London and Paris were at the centre of the concerns that governments had about public order in the two cities. In many cases, in the same places where black genres of music spread, criminal activities such as prostitution and gambling coexisted. One of the means with which states exercised control over clubs and regulated the music scenes was through the issue of licenses to clubs. Clubs had to respect specific laws and were obliged to respect legislation. Nevertheless, there were a high number of clubs that made irregularities and did not register, in an attempt to avoid the police, who in turn reinforced the activity of monitoring.

State intervention was subjected to the pressure that specific groups put on authorities, including members of the parliament, organisations representing specific institutions, such as hotels, restaurants and musicians' unions, but also private citizens who wrote to the authorities in order to make their voice been heard. State action was in many cases linked to the influence that these groups were able to have on governments. However, it was a process of negotiation between these groups and authorities, based on the different interests that they had.

The work of negotiation of the unions is at the centre of the first section of the chapter. It investigates the role played by musicians' unions as a pressure group that urged governments to take actions in the interests of British and French musicians who faced difficulties in finding employment. The relationship between the unions and the state in the regulation of the labour market in the music scenes was based on a process of negotiation that in both cases led to legislative changes.

The second section devotes attention to the attitude towards foreigners and immigration policies that impacted the performances of foreign musicians in each country. World War I marked a decisive change in policy regarding foreigners and immigration control, which were characterised by an effort of the states to maintain public order. These policies had an impact on foreign musicians arriving in Britain and France, and, especially in the 1930s, on British and French musicians who suffered from the economic crisis, and who through their unions, protested against their foreign presence.

The third section of the chapter deals with state intervention that involved the maintenance of public order in London and Paris. From the sources available in the archives, in Paris police activity seemed to be organised through individual surveillance and to be more concerned with

political activities,[6] whereas in London police activity centered on control of premises and to issues of moral order, too. The British sources testify to this, which is remarkable and subsequent analysis constitutes the main part of this section.

[6] Michael Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis: Interwar Paris and the Seeds of Third World Nationalism* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2015), 32–35.

> Les musiciens ne peuvent pas, ne doivent pas s'occuper des frontières. Les intérêts de chaque musicien, quelque soit sa nationalité, doivent être les intérêts communs de tous les musiciens.[7]

In May 1904 during a speech at the Third Congress organised in Paris by the Fédération des Artistes Musiciens de France, the General Secretary of the Amalgamated Musicians' Union, the first British union of musicians founded in 1893, underlined that cooperation on an international level was crucial for creating good relations between musicians at a time when many musicians went to work abroad.

In both Britain and France, musicians' unions played a crucial role in the music scenes both at a national level and at a local level in the two capitals, where several issues emerged more powerfully. The spread of new genres of music and the introduction of new technologies that contributed to the process of mechanisation of music were at the basis of the difficulties that groups of musicians experienced in the years that followed the First World War. As Howard Becker has written, change in the art world is continuous; it can be gradual or dramatic and it reacts to impulses from external sources or internal tensions. When innovations alter art worlds the change implies a process, in which "one or more important groups of participants find themselves displaced by the change." However, Becker has clarified that, rather than establishing if a change is revolutionary or not, it is more important to "understand the process by which participants ignore, absorb, or fight change, which makes it a revolution or something less dramatic."[8]

Professional musicians represented by the unions were one of the groups who were displaced by the changes that the diffusion of new musical genres, the performances of foreign musicians and the mechanisation of music brought in the two countries.

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[7] Angèle David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions in Britain, France, and the United States: On the Possibilities and Impossibilities of Transnational Militant Transfers in an International Industry', *Labour History Review* 74, no. 3 (December 2009): 87.
[8] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 301–8.

These issues affected musicians in other countries, too, including Belgium, Germany, Sweden, and the United States. The music industry was facing structural changes due to the spread of new technology such as recording and broadcasting, and the integration of a large number of musicians into the labour market. Since the late nineteenth century, the development of the entertainment industry, with the spread of places for entertainment, music publishing activities and the possibility to buy cheaper musical instruments, gave many amateurs an opportunity to make money easily on the music circuit. Many of these players were unskilled musicians who accepted any position at any condition, and musical institutions and organisations were not able to control their access to the music profession.[9] As Cyril Ehrlich has explained, the influence of gramophone, cinema and radio, created new forms of employment especially from the 1920s, and this helped musicians find employment. Ehrlich has distinguished into three groups of musicians separated by income and skills in London. The largest group formed by older and weaker players, amateurs and part-timers working in low level music-halls and theatres and in small provincial cinemas; a second group constituted by musicians better equipped with conventional or newly fashionable skills working in cinemas and in dancing clubs of the West End; and the smallest group of popular musicians who formed an élite in economic terms because of the higher salaries they commanded.[10]

The process of the industrialisation of music changed musicians' occupations, and this change went together with a lack of specific regulation. As a result, musicians performing in music halls, secondary theatres and clubs, worked in perpetually unstable conditions, with short-term contracts, insecurity, and often low salaries which led to the introduction of twice-nightly performances.[11]

After initial restrictions to membership in the early stages of organisation, defending musicians and facing the difficulty of constructing an organic membership across a profession characterised by frequently short or medium-term jobs and multiple jobs, unions' membership was open to all those practicing music in the 1920s. This implied both professional musicians, amateurs, and musicians with all different specialities, could play in orchestras, theatres, music-

[9] Angèle David-Guillou has explained that in the British context between 1879 and 1930, while the population almost doubled, the number of musicians and music teachers increased from seven thousand to fifty thousand. David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 291–92. For an early history of the beginning of musicians unions in France see Joël-Marie Fauquet, 'Les Débuts Du Syndicalisme Musical En France. L'art et l'action', in *La Musique: Du Théorique Au Politique* (Paris: Aux Amateurs de livres: Diffusion, Klincksieck, 1991), 219–259.

[10] Cyril Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain Since the Eighteenth Century: A Social History* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1985), 205–7.

[11] David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 292–93; Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain*, 186–208.

halls, cinemas or clubs.[12] However, this did not mean that all musicians were part of the union or that they found it convenient to be a member, especially in the case of musicians performing dance music particularly black styles of music. In many cases, these musicians found jobs in the music scenes through informal connections and did not become part of the organisations. Moreover, the unions opposed their employment especially in the case of foreign musicians.

Ehrlich has defined the 1930s as "watershed years for professional musicians" because "three influences coalesced to transform their world: technology, patronage, and the collapse of domestic music-making." The displacement of cinema orchestras and the establishment of the BBC as central to the distribution of music were the most immediate effects of this transformation in Britain.[13] In addition to structural changes in the music world, the economic crisis of the 1930s caused further difficulties with the decline of the audience spending power of the audience, and this was often blamed for causing distress. The organisations that were affected by the crisis with a decline of their membership, reacted to the change by putting pressure on the governments so that they took action to better protect British and French musicians.[14] In this context, the restrictions that authorities put in place in various countries were in part the result of governments responses to challenging circumstances and of the pressure that unions were able to exercise in order to protect native musicians against foreign competition.[15]

British and French organisations put pressure on authorities through letters to members of the government or to the police and, when possible, through meetings with them in which they discussed their requests. The unions campaigned against the employment of foreign musicians regardless of the genres of music played and the countries of origin. For instance, in 1923 the London branch of the Musicians' Union London made a successful campaign against the visit by the Vienna State Orchestra.[16] However, from the mid 1920s, complaints often regarded American musicians arriving in Britain and France, who were the principal group of foreign musicians that caused concern because of the high demand of American jazz and dance music.

[12] David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 298–99; John Williamson and Martin Cloonan, *Players' Work Time: A History of the British Musicians' Union, 1893-2013* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2016), 48–49.
[13] Ehrlich, *The Music Profession in Britain*, 209.
[14] Cloonan and Williamson reported that from more than 22,000 members in 1921 the Musicians' Union membership dropped to less than 8,000 in 1933: Williamson and Cloonan, *Players' Work Time*, 60.
[15] Andrew Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism. The British Musicians' Union and Restrictions on Foreign Musicians', in *New Jazz Conceptions: History, Theory, Practice* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2017), 70.
[16] Martin Cloonan and Matt Brennan, 'Alien Invasions: The British Musicians' Union and Foreign Musicians', *Popular Muisc* 32, no. 2 (May 2013): 286–87.

The main issue for British musicians was the fact that they faced difficulties in finding employment and that irregularities, such as tax evasion, benefited foreign musicians. One of the points raised by British musicians protesting about the presence of American musicians was linked to income taxes. On 1st October 1924 the Minister of Labour wrote to the Chancellor of Exchequer,[17] informing him that he had received complaints from the Trades Union Congress because, while British musicians in the United States were subject to an 8% income tax, it seemed that American musicians in Britain avoided paying taxes almost completely. To respond to the Trades Union Congress, the Minister sought more precise information. The Treasury answered that US had recently changed and a foreign musician was liable to pay 4% income tax in 1924, a similar liability for foreign musicians playing in Britain. Even if the Ministry recognised that some musicians evaded tax, it would be difficult to adopt measures and prosecute them without involving other American visitors "whose presence," wrote the Chancellor, "is advantageous on general grounds."[18] This example was typical of the timid action the government exercised vis-à-vis American musicians and artists; the protests of British counterparts notwithstanding.

The vogue for American music influenced club managers to seek bands which could meet the demand, and they tended to employ American bands. However, the possibility of engaging these musicians was subjected the issuance of entry permits distributed by the government. Thus, the government had to deal with pressure from two groups: managers and entertainment agents willing to obtain permits for foreign musicians, and musicians' unions complaining about their arrival which affected British musicians' work in clubs. The procedure the government followed consisted of an examination based on the merits of the artists applying for permits which also indicated specific conditions for each case. As the Musicians' Union noted in a letter to the Minister of Labour dated 5th September 1925, this system of restrictions produced positive results in relation to the safeguarding and protection of the interests of British musicians, creating new employment opportunities. Apprehensions expressed in the letter concerned the possibility that the restrictions applied were abandoned; an outcome that would have a disastrous effect on the work of British musicians.[19]

The Musicians' Union had been formed a few years before in 1921 when the Amalgamated Musicians' Union and the London Orchestral Union of Professional Musicians merged.

[17] The Chancellor of Exchequer is the Minister of Finance in Britain.
[18] TNA LAB 2/1188/3406/1925
[19] TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR278/41/1925

Founded in 1893 the Amalgamated Musicians Union was the first organisation that admitted any musician, including amateurs and women, regardless of the genres of music played.[20] The organisation denied membership only to conductors and military bands. Unions in other countries followed its example, such as the Fédération des Artistes Musiciens in France, which adopted a similar system in 1902.[21]

The Musicians' Union played a crucial role in the music scene by putting pressure on the government to protect professional musicians, at a time when they had to face the spread of new technology - which lead to a process of mechanisation of music - and the competition of other musicians.[22] As Andrew Hodgetts has written, opposition to the employment of foreign musicians was part of the union's long-standing policy to protect British musicians as a reaction to multiple factors.[23] Among these, was the internal competition of unskilled musicians, an issue that had been dealt with by unions in various countries in the early years of their formation. The large number of amateurs and untrained musicians who had entered the music labour market and had become semi-professional musicians, insisted unions include them in order to reduce the risk of unfair competition, and to increase the membership, and subsequently, the union's power and influence.[24]

In the 1920s the competition of foreign musicians was considered one of the main reasons for the difficulties experienced by musicians, especially those of a medium or low level. An article that appeared in the conservative newspaper *Daily Express* on 14th October 1925 clearly described how certain sectors of the population perceived the situation to be damaging for professional British musicians:

> The next musical invasion threatened is that of tango bands. Visiting the Musicians' Union, I found pavements of Archer street filled with unemployed bandsmen. There are over 500 out-of-work musicians in London; and yet foreign tango bands are seeking permits to come here, to play music which Englishmen can play equally well.

[20] For an history of the Amalgamated Musicians' Union see Chapter 1 of Williamson and Cloonan, *Players' Work Time*, 36–59.
[21] David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 299.
[22] For a reconstruction of the early history of the union see Chapters 1-3 of Williamson and Cloonan, *Players' Work Time*, 18–59.
[23] Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 66.
[24] David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 298.

The journalist reported the remarks of the union's organisers who lamented that members of tango bands were not "players of the highest type," the only category whom they deemed worth performing in the country. By allowing these bands to enter Britain, the Conservative government was not protecting British musicians:

> The Americans are very highly paid, and therefore not such a peril. But these tango bands, if the Ministry of Labour allow them in, will be brought from cheap cafés. The present Minister of Labour has disappointed us. […] Sir A. Steel Maitland is not keeping out foreign bands in the way that a Conservative who preaches 'Britain for the British' should do. France is barred to foreign musicians. So is America; but the English market is not kept for us."[25]

As this passage shows, there was a differentiation between foreign musicians of a high level who were not "such a peril" for the employment of British musicians in the music scene, and bands of a lower level that, if allowed to play in the country, would compete directly with British musicians.

The opposition to the presence of foreign musicians in Britain was a general aversion motivated by the perception that foreign players represented a threat to the employment of British musicians. However, in the early 1930s the vogue of American music and above all the denial of entry permits to perform in the United States for British musicians, directed the opposition towards American musicians in particular.

Trade unions put pressure on the government with regard to the issue of foreign musicians playing in Britain. In June 1929 the Secretary of the London Trades Council wrote a letter to the newly appointed Minister of Labour of the Labour government, Margaret Bondfield. The Secretary reported the resolution by the Musicians' Union, which complained about the granting of permits for nine American musicians employed at the Café de Paris, one of the elegant clubs in the West End of London. The complaint regarded the fact that the government granted the permits in a context of serious unemployment. The Secretary asked the government

[25] Hannen Swaffer, "Will Tango Bands Be Barred?," *Daily Express*, (14 October 1925): 7, Press Clipping, TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR278/41/1925

to consult the Union before granting permits to foreign musicians and demanded that employers should not be allowed to reject British players "on merely frivolous grounds."[26]

A similar criticism towards the actions of the Ministry of Labour was expressed by another organisation, the British Empire Union. On 1st July 1929 the Union wrote to the Minister noting that it was the Ministry's "policy to relax rather than to stiffen the regulations under which American bands are allowed to enter this country." The British Empire Union had taken action on behalf of British musicians by putting pressure on the previous government in order to deal with the perception of British musicians that they faced an unfair foreign competition, especially regarding American musicians. The government had determined that in the case of bands in which American musicians were granted permits, British musicians should also be engaged, and they could then benefit from this system because the entry of foreign musicians created employment for them, too. However, for the Union this was not enough and the organisation asked the newly-appointed Minister that existing permits granted to alien musicians not be renewed in order to create vacancies that British musicians could fill. This action would become crucial in view of further developments on the entertainment circuit that affected musicians' employment, especially the advent of talking pictures which were mainly American.[27]

A few months later, in November 1929 the General Council of London Trades Unions lamented the ease with which foreign musicians could extend their permits. The letter the Council sent to the Minister of Labour reported cases in which the engagement of alien musicians resulted in resident British bands losing their employment, and complained that the Minister had not consulted the Musicians' Union before granting permits.

The Minister's reply in December 1929 reflects how authorities dealt with this issue. In continuity with the government that had preceded her, the Minister clarified that the actions of the Department dealing with the admission of foreign musicians had protected the interests of British musicians. Indeed, the employer who wanted to engage a foreign band was required to employ a British band equal in size to the alien band, or if they wanted to introduce only several foreign musicians "of outstanding ability," their percentage should not exceed one quarter of the total band members and this introduction should not cause the discharge of any British musician. The Minister did not deem it necessary to adopt any more restrictions on the entry of foreign musicians. Those who had hitherto been admitted were all highly specialised, with

[26] TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR528/2/1929
[27] TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR528/2/1929

artistic merits, and resided in Britain for a limited period of time, thus it was doubtful whether they could be considered to be in direct competition with British musicians. In addition, the Minister made it clear that the Musicians' Union had not been excluded, on the contrary it had been consulted when it was necessary. The point was that the union had recently opposed every permit application requested for foreign musicians "apparently irrespective of merits;" an attitude that did not help the work of the Ministry.[28]

One of the issues that the government had to deal with was linked to the collaboration between different ministries. On 10th April 1930 representatives from the Home Office and the Ministry of Labour discussed several matters which were affecting the employment regulations concerning of foreign musicians. There were cases in which the Ministry of Labour agreed to extend the contract of foreign musicians who had been warned to leave the country by the Home Office. During the meeting they agreed that the Ministry of Labour could consider an application within a specific period of time of two weeks after which the Home Office could accomplish the procedure for making the alien musician leave the country.[29]

The actions of the Ministry of Labour in the early 1930s seemed to satisfy professional British musicians and the Musicians' Union because, as an article published in the *Melody Maker* in 1930 stated, in an increasing number of cases, the Ministry did not renew permits once they expired. British musicians had benefitted from this policy that had begun to refuse to allow American bands and solo musicians entry to the country, particularly in the case of engagements in hotels and cafés orchestras, the sector where the majority of jobs were held by foreign musicians.[30]

In September 1930 the Musicians' Union created a Dance Band Section which gave further legitimacy to the union in its claim to act in the interests of dance musicians, too. A few months later, in January 1931, the union reaffirmed the positivity of the new direction of authorities' policies noticing how collaboration with the London Trades Council had proved fruitful:

> A further push has been given against the door of alien entry. It is not quite closed yet, and it may still from time to time admit individual players from whom the employer can state a good case on individual

[28] TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR528/2/1929
[29] TNA LAB 2/1188/AR3434/1930
[30] "An International Blunder. Are American Musicians the Least Desirable Aliens?," *Melody Maker* V, no. 50 (February 1930): 109.

> merit, but it appears fairly certain that in future very few, if any, complete combinations will achieve entry into this country.[31]

In the French context, the musicians' union had similar concerns around the crisis that French musicians were facing. The difficulties that musicians had to deal with in various countries were similar and linked to the instability of the entertainment industry as a work sector for four reasons: the system of agencies; the condition of unemployment with the absence of standard contracts; the competition from non-union labour, especially military bands and foreign musicians; and the challenges caused by the introduction of new technology.[32]

The introduction of sound movies had a great impact on employment opportunities for musicians. In the mid 1920s, sound technology based on the system of synchronisation of phonograph records with movies scenes started being introduced to cinemas, replacing silent movies. As a result, musicians who used to play live music alongside movie projections, began to lose employment. Not only did this happen in the United States, where the film industry was stronger, but it became an international problem.[33] This technological innovation coincided with the economic crisis of the early 1930s and caused further difficulties to musicians who faced the prospect of unemployment.[34] In 1929 the letter that the Secretary of the London Trades Council wrote to the Minister of Labour – which protested against permit issuance for nine American musicians - regarded the fact that the government granted the permits in the context of unemployment, which was "aggravated by the dictation of American capitalists in the British Cinematographic Industry."[35] This comment is significant because it reveals how the union linked the changes occurring in the British movie industry to the power that American companies wielded over it.

Musicians' unions in the countries facing this industrial change, reacted to the issue of unemployment with a call for a reduction in the employment of foreign musicians and an

[31] "The Dance Section of the M.U. Third Meeting Report," *Melody Maker* VI, no. 61 (January 1931): 21.
[32] Angèle David Guillou has called this a "unified international context," David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 298.
[33] Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 70. James Kraft has analysed this phenomenon in the context of the United States, James R. Kraft, 'The "Pit" Musicians: Mechanization in the Movie Theaters, 1926-1934', *Labor History* 35, no. 1 (1994): 66–89.
[34] James Kraft has reconstructed how in 1931 the number of unemployed theatre musicians in the United States was 20.000. Kraft, 'The "Pit" Musicians', 87. In Britain the recorded sound in cinemas was labelled 'single biggest crisis' for the members of the Musicians', Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 71.
[35] TNA LAB 2/1188/EDAR528/2/1929

abstention from work permit issuance for foreigners. It is interesting to note that musicians' unions looked at what was happening in other countries and referred to the measures introduced abroad as examples on how to face this challenge. For instance, in 1931 the Musicians' Union journal published two articles which dealt with the Belgian and the French cases. While in Belgium, the government had introduced restrictions for the arrival of foreign musicians, in France authorities did not introduce direct restrictions on foreign musicians, but an indirect system of restrictions that required the club or restaurant employing a foreign band to employ French musicians, too.[36]

In France, musicians' unions appeared in the early years of the twentieth century. The Fédération des Artistes Musiciens was created in 1902, and, as Angèle David-Guillou has noted, similarly to the British Amalgamated Musicians Union, it presented the opportunity to join the union to anyone practising music, without restrictions.[37]

Another organisation had been created the previous year specifically for Parisian musicians. Founded in 1901 with the name Chambre syndicale des musiciens Parisiens, the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens de Paris et de la region Parisienne played a crucial role in putting pressure on French authorities urging them to take action to safeguard French musicians.

In January 1930 an article published in *L'artiste musicien de Paris*, the official journal of the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens de Paris, analysed the situation that musicians were experiencing in France. Unemployment among the 7,500 members of the Syndicat stood at 10%. One factor deemed to have contributed to this phenomenon was the spread of new forms of technology and mechanisation, especially sound movies. Mainly American, the advent of sound movies had a direct impact on French musicians, causing the loss of their livelihood. Nevertheless, the presence of foreign musicians was the factor upon which the Syndicat insisted the most to explain the crisis. The article refused the idea that employers engaged foreign musicians because they had to satisfy a foreign clientele and French musicians were not able to adapt to American and Latin rhythms: "we can justifiably be surprised that it is required to have a foreign orchestra when it is simply a matter of dancing a fox-trot, a tango or a boston."[38] It was not a real need of the employers to have foreign bands, because French musicians were able to meet the needs of the labour market. Furthermore, the Syndicat denounced how in many

[36] Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 71–72.
[37] David-Guillou, 'Early Musicians' Unions', 299.
[38] "On peut s'étonner à juste titre qu'il soit déclaré necessaire d'avoir un orchestre étranger quand il s'agit uniquement de danser un fox-trott, un tango ou un boston." "Rapport. La Situation des Musiciens en France établi en vue d'une action parlementaire," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XV, no. 144 (Janvier 1930): 26-27.

cases foreign musicians did not respect laws on foreigners. However, the efforts of the organisation in putting pressure on authorities to enourage them to deal with these irregularities had not yet produced appreciable results. Even after inspections, foreign musicians whose papers were not in order did not suffer repercussions and they often simply found jobs in other places. Among the examples reported in the article was the American orchestra *Blackbirds* that had entered France in 1929 to support the Revue of the Moulin-Rouge but had later requested permits for employment in a Parisian nightclub. A three-month permit was issued with the initial decision, communicated to the Syndicat, that it would not be renewed. Still, the individual application of the club manager proved to be successful in obtaining the extension.

The Syndicat was optimistic that a collaboration between the union and authorities could be productive, however. It requested the introduction of more restrictive measures to safeguard the interests of French musicians. In particular, the union requested that authorities did not renew the *cartes d'identité* issued for a limited period of time and that they introduce a nationwide extension of the stipulations of the Act limiting the proportion of foreign workers employed in a workplace at 10%, which had originally been introduced in 1922 by the municipal council of Paris. The article justified this last request by making comparisons with what happened in other countries where foreign musicians found it very difficult to obtain work:

> Nous ne demandons pas que les frontières de France soient fermées à tout étranger musicien, quoique nous pourrons trouver dans l'attitude de certains pays à l'égard des musiciens français un encouragement à l'adoption de mesures aussi rigoureuses. En effet, il est presque impossible, et tout à fait impossible dans certains pays, à un musicien français d'aller travailler dans les pays étrangers. […] Nous croyons donc que l'on agirait sagement en faisant appliquer un pourcentage de 10% de musiciens étrangers dans les orchestres en France.[39]

This passage shows that in many cases, union attitudes contained a mixture of protectionism and internationalism, as exchanges in music were given a high value. Nevertheless, the restrictions on foreign musicians that several countries were introducing could push unions to pressure authorities into introducing stricter measures.

[39] "Rapport. La Situation des Musiciens en France établi en vue d'une action parlementaire," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XV, no. 144 (Janvier 1930): 27.

In order to gauge the Préfet de Police on further actions to be taken to face the situation that musicians were experiencing, the Syndicat wrote to him on 14th May 1930. In the letter, the union underlined how the crisis was afflicting the category of musicians and how it originated from various factors, among which was the competition of foreign players. The union asked for the Préfet's opinion on the possibility of introducing a cap of 10% on foreign musicians employed in Parisian clubs and cabarets.[40]

The reply arrived a few days later in a letter written on 22nd May 1930 from the Chef du Contentieux, and addressed to the Chef du Service des Théâtres. In the letter he clarified that it was not possible to accept the request made by the Syndicat of the imposition of a 10% limit on foreign musicians employment on various premises. The Préfet de Police could intervene in these issues only when they concerned public order, and it was not his duty to regulate the foreign employment conditions or to protect national labour. As public order was not at issue in this case, the principle of freedom prevailed:

> Le principe de la liberté du travail et du commerce ne souffre d'autres dérogations que celles qui se trouvent justifiées par la protection de l'ordre public. Or ce dernier n'est pas en cause en l'espèce.[41]

Public order was the main concern that authorities had. As the Préfet's reply shows, when it was not at issue, authorities tended not to intervene, and let commercial activities make their choices.

Nevertheless, the Syndicat continued to apply pressure on the relevant authorities and eventually this strategy proved successful. In 1932 the French parliament approved a law limiting the proportion of foreign workers that could be employed in a workplace to 10%, and the following year a specific decree applied the same threshold to foreign musicians playing in hotels, cafés, cabarets, restaurants and dance clubs in the Seine region.

It is worth noting that in Britain an article published in January 1932 in the *Musicians' Journal* - the official journal of the Musicians' Union - commented on the demonstrations by

[40] APP DB 415
[41] APP DB 415

French musicians against the employment of foreign musicians, claiming that these protests were not anti-foreign or xenophobic, but simply a call for authorities to support French musicians. The article used the example of France to support the campaign for an introduction of restrictions on foreigners in Britain, and in general, in all countries.[42]

This measure notwithstanding the Syndicat noticed that the situation of musicians did not improve substantially. In 1935 another article, which appeared in *L'artiste musicien de Paris* reported that 25% of musicians in the Parisian region were unemployed. The article clearly described how the crisis that had led to that situation was caused by structural changes in the music world such as the mechanisation of music and the proliferation of cinemas:

> La crise pour nous date de 1930: elle éclata brusquement avec la généralisation de la musique mécanique et l'installation dans les cinémas de la bande sonore; en quelques mois nous comptâmes un millier de chômeurs. Evincés de quartier en quartier, des salles de spectacle, nos camarades se rebattirent sur les brasseries et les cafés qui conservaient encore un orchestra.

These structural changes coupled with the general economic crisis of the early 1930s, which increased musician unemployment in the spaces for live music. For the Syndicat the crisis that musicians were experiencing could be overcome by an intervention by a government intervention, which was able to reduce taxes on music shows:

> Survint la crise générale: partout, ou à peu près, l'orchestre devint un luxe insoutenable […]. *Seule, une diminution de la taxe sur les spectacles peut résoudre la crise* [*emphasis in the original* (a/n)].

[42] Cit. in Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 72.

In addition, the article stated that the issue of foreign competition was still unresolved despite the measures taken in 1932 and 1933. The main difficulty was that authorities did not rapidly intervene when clubs did not respect the law and employed foreign musicians illegally:

> Malheureusement la constatation des infractions est trop lente: quand, enfin, les policiers arrivent pour le constat dans l'établissement désigné, l'orchestre délinquant a déjà plié bagages: il est parti s'installer ailleurs.[43]

The protest of the Syndicat against the employment of foreign musicians is significant for two reasons. First, the measures enacted by the authorities did not make club managers completely stop employing foreign musicians on their premises, and a grey area emerged where foreign musicians found employment but frequently changed their place of work in order to avoid prosecutions. Second, the police found it difficult to dealt with the illegal employment of foreign musicians effectively, also due to the high level of mobility within the music scene.

In Britain, even if a new policy direction introduced by the government had started to meet the request of the Musicians' Union, discussions on the matter of foreign artists entering the country continued. In 1931 a regulation established that permits to foreign artists were to be issued unconditionally in cases of "artists of international value" and only for a limited period of time if the artists were not of international standing.[44] In the early 1930s, various American stars performed in the country and were greeted with enthusiasm, such as Louis Armstrong, Duke Ellington and Coleman Hawkins.[45]

The arrival of Duke Ellington for a British tour in 1933 placed the issue of foreign musicians be at the centre of public debate with renewed strength. In particular, many British journals underlined the disparity in treatment on each side of the Atlantic. Whilst in Britain Ellington was allowed to play with his band, British artists such as the bandleader Jack Hylton, were denied permits to perform in the United States. The Ministry of Labour found it difficult to deal with this situation because the United States adopted a policy that further restricted the

[43] "La France qui souffre… 25% des musiciens professionnels frappés par la crise, sont en chômage," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XX, n. 203 (Janvier 1935): 3-5
[44] TNA LAB 2/1189/ETAR9494/1931/Amended
[45] Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 66–67.

possibility of foreign musicians to work in the country. In 1934 the US government announced that it would not consider any further application concerning work permits made by foreign musicians. On both sides of the Atlantic musicians' unions were putting pressure on their governments in order to make them take action against the competition of foreign musicians. Indeed, in those years the American Federation of Musicians opposed any attempt to issue work permits to foreign musicians by threatening strike action. Ellington applied again for a permit to perform in Britain in 1934 and in 1935, but the Ministry of Labour refused to grant it.[46]

Eventually, in 1935 the Ministry of Labour communicated that it would not grant further permits to any American artists until the attitude towards British musicians in the United States became more favourable. From that year onwards, American musicians who toured Europe were unable to obtain permits to perform in Britain. Martin Cloonan and Matt Brennan have challenged the idea of a ban on American bands and musicians occurring between the mid 1930s and the mid 1950s, to which previous studies on dance music in Britain had referred.[47] The two scholars pointed to the fact that the Musicians' Union did not use the word "ban" in their documents, and the focus of the debate was mostly the issue of reciprocity. Indeed, the opposition to foreign musicians was largely driven by the lack of reciprocity on the part of unions in foreign musicians' country of origin. The attitude of the American Federation of Musicians, which was reacting to unemployment in the United States with a policy of opposition to any application by foreign musicians to work in the country, was at the core of the debate on barring foreign musicians in Britain.[48] Restrictions on American musicians were part of a broader effort to limit the entry of foreign musicians into Britain that dated back to the previous decade. As Andrew Hodgetts has written, the measures adopted by the British government were "part of a global network of relationships between musicians, unions and governments of numerous countries."[49] These restrictions did not represent "the establishment of a new policy," but "the stricter application of an old one," and the Musicians' Union's policy of opposing the employment of foreign musicians was "part of their long-standing policy to protect British musicians."[50]

[46] Cloonan and Brennan, 'Alien Invasions', 283–84.
[47] For instance Oliver, *Black Music in Britain*, 14; Rye, 'Fearsome Means of Discord', 55; McKay, *Circular Breathing*, 30.
[48] Cloonan and Brennan, 'Alien Invasions', 278–80.
[49] Hodgetts, 'Protection and Internationalism', 65.
[50] Hodgetts, 66; 67.

Years later in an interview the music journalist Max Jones recalled the impact that this situation had in the country. Apart from hearing jazz through bands during wartime, the "sort of mutual ban" the two unions imposed meant that:

> No musicians or fans, but most importantly no British jazz or dance band musicians were able to hear American jazz men at first hand from the beginning of 1935 right through into 1956, with the exception of a couple of special events and some variety artists.

Furthermore, for Jones this situation helped jazz music produced in Britain survive longer than it might have done without the restrictions.[51] The arrival of foreign musicians was one of the main elements that had a significant impact on the transformation of the music scenes in the first part of the twentieth century. Indeed, a series of policies that influenced the spread of black genres of music and the performances of musicians in the music scenes of London and Paris were linked to regulations against foreign presence on the soils of the two countries.

[51] Jones, interview.

In metropolises such as London and Paris, attitudes towards foreigners and the legislation enacted by authorities went together with the tendency of the cities to become cosmopolitan places, especially with regard to art forms such as music. In the 1920s the demand for specific styles of music linked to international fashions, and the consequent tendency of impresarios and managers of clubs to employ foreign musicians, contributed to the presence of a large proportion of foreign players who were active on the music scenes of both cities. These musicians were subject to the legislation that governments established to manage the foreign population in Britain and France. Therefore, they and their employers had to deal with the measures that authorities enacted in this respect in order to work in the music scenes.

World War I represented an important turning point with regard to policies on foreigners and immigration. As Clifford Rosenberg has made clear in the case of France, the end of the conflict marked a significant change: "modern immigration controls emerged not in the face of mounting xenophobia in the 1930s, as is often assumed, but rather in the context of demobilisation after World War I, as part of the French government's effort to maintain public order while relinquishing wartime controls."[52]

Until the end of the nineteenth century, many European governments had concentrated their concerns on the poor population in the countryside and on domestic criminals, particularly in bigger cities. In France, too, measures taken to track mobile population were meant to preserve public order. Between 1900 and the advent of World War I, the strategy to protect French workers and to contain strike activities led authorities to shift their focus towards nationality. Foreigners began to be monitored through a system of identification based on written documents, which was introduced to track mobile populations. A decree and a law enacted in 1888 and in 1893 respectively, established that foreigners had to prove their identity and to register with authorities in order to live and work in France. Nevertheless, measures adopted during the conflict enabled the government to overcome bureaucratic difficulties in dealing with this kind of information. In April 1917 two decrees obliged foreigners to obtain and carry identity cards with them at all times.[53]

[52] Rosenberg, *Policing Paris*, 6.

[53] On the role of the French police towards foreigners see Marie-Claude Blanc-Chaléard et al., eds., *Police et migrants: France 1667-1939*, Histoire (Rennes: Presses universitaires de Rennes, 2001). Works on the issue of immigration in France include Gérard Noiriel, *Le Creuset Français: Histoire de l'immigration XIXe-XXe Siècles*

In the years that followed World War I, the French government introduced a new system to police foreigners in Paris based on measures that had originally been directed towards anarchists, criminals, prostitutes and vagabonds. During the 1920s the immigrant population in Paris increased significantly and the police re-structured its immigration services. They created a database to track foreigners and verified information through door-to-door checks by police agents. On 12th August 1924 the Minister of the Interior introduced a decree that established that all foreigners willing to obtain identity cards needed to present a written declaration in which they had to indicate if they were salaried employees and what kind of job they performed, or if they were owners of a business activity. All those who could not present this document would be considered deceitful and therefore expelled from the country.[54] In addition, tourist permits were reduced to a period of two weeks instead of two months, and, in 1925 the political section of the police started to be used to monitor immigrants, too. This was followed by raids on immigrant clubs and neighbourhoods, in order to enforce registration with the authorities, and arrests of those who did not have their papers in order.[55]

The importance of World War I for the introduction of these policies, also emerges in the special treatment that foreign soldiers, who had fought in the French Army, managed to obtain during the conflict. The circular letters of December 1926 and January 1928 established that only foreigners who had volunteered for the French Army during World War I were exempt from paying the tax required to obtain the identity card. In a letter dated 27 June 1928 and addressed to the Prefect of the Police, the Minister of the Interior agreed with the request of the American Organisation of Volunteers which asked French authorities to grant this exemption to those American citizens who could not prove their voluntary military service in the French Army because of the destruction of several archives.[56]

In the British context, several measures directed at foreigners were enacted at the beginning of the First World War, namely the Aliens Restriction Act in 1914, which was amended in 1919. This Act introduced a great number of restrictions on the presence of foreigners during wartime or when authorities declared a state of emergency. Restrictions included prohibition of entering the country, deportation, the obligation to reside in particular districts, and compliance

(Paris: Seuil, 1988); Yves Lequin, *La Mosaïque France: Histoire Des Étrangers et de l'immigration* (Paris: Larousse, 1988).

[54] APP DA 742/80

[55] For an overview of the evolution of the Paris Police in these years see Chapters 1 and 2 of Rosenberg, *Policing Paris*.

[56] APP DA 472/469

with provisions such as registration. Contravening the order or failing to respect its provisions could result in punishments such as fines or imprisonment.[57]

During the war, the need to supply the labour force had led to the arrival of men from Southern Asia, East Africa and the West Indies. They usually settled in port cities where they worked as seamen or in industries. The closure of munitions factories and demobilisation at the end of the conflict caused a difficult situation because of the large number of people who became unemployed. Riots against non-white groups took place in 1919 in several port cities including London, Cardiff and Glasgow, and targeted Chinese workers, blacks, and Jews. It was in this social and political climate that African seamen were deported from Liverpool and Cardiff, and the Amendment to the Aliens Restriction Act was passed in December 1919. This law extended the aliens legislation into peacetime and established further restrictions on foreigners. For instance, former enemy aliens could not enter the country for a period of three years, and they were not allowed to gain employment in any office in the civil service or to serve on British ships, except if a person had served in the British Navy during the war and had performed good and faithful service. Every former alien that resided in the country at that time had to be deported unless a special committee granted him the permission to remain. In addition, the law introduced imprisonment and penal servitude to any alien whose actions were deemed to provoke sedition or disaffection among the population or to promote industrial unrest.[58]

The Aliens Order, promulgated in 1920 under the 1919 Act, established that any foreigner who wanted to settle in Britain had to register with the police and carry their identity documents with them at all times. In order to find employment in the country they had to obtain a permit from the Ministry of Labour. Failure to respect the law could lead to prosecution and/or deportation. The Order gave the police the power to imprison aliens without the need of an arrest warrant; to deport those whose presence was considered dangerous and to close restaurants and places of entertainment that they frequented. In 1925 another law established that alien seamen were subject to the 1920 order. Therefore, black seamen had to register with the police and to carry identity papers. Thus, British-born citizens could be stopped by agents and questioned.[59]

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[57] Aliens Restriction Act (1914), http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/4-5/12/contents/enacted. On the treatment of foreigners as enemy aliens in Great Britain during the war see J. C. Bird, *Control of Enemy Alien Civilians in Great Britain, 1914-1918* (New York: Garland, 1986).

[58] Aliens Restriction (Amendment) Act 1919, http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo5/9-10/92/enacted

[59] The continuity in the measures against aliens, which dated back to the nineteenth century, has been examined by David Cesarani, 'An Alien Concept? The Continuity of Anti-Alienism in British Society before 1940', in *The Internment of Aliens in Twentieth Century Britain* (London and Portland: Frank Cass, 1993), 25–52. More general studies on the history of immigration in Great Britain include: James Walvin, *Passage to Britain: Immigration in*

In the urban contexts of metropolises such as Paris and London, the legislation enacted by authorities and the opposition towards foreigners occurred at a time when the cities were becoming increasingly cosmopolitan places. This was especially evident with regard to forms of art such as music. In the music scenes of both cities the presence of a large proportion of foreign players was a consequence of the demand for specific genres of music linked to international fashions that led impresarios and club owners to employ foreign musicians. This was one of the problems that caused trouble for authorities, especially in the context of the economic crisis of the early 1930s, when they had to face the issue of unemployment.

In the specific case of foreign artists performing in Britain, the main issue for British authorities was that employers typically employed them even if in many cases they did not perform specific roles, and they were engaged regardless of whether there were British artists who could be employed in their place. In December 1931 the Home Office tried to face this problem with a series of measures. Foreign actors and variety artists would be allowed to work in Great Britain provided that several conditions were met. When authorities granted a permit they should send a covering letter to the employer clarifying that the permit was issued specifically for a performance of a particular part and the foreign artist should be informed that this did not signify that permission to play any other part would be granted automatically. The extension of the permit could be granted by the Home Office only once, and in this case a letter would advise the artist that after that period he or she had to leave the country. The only exception to this regulation was in the case of artists of "international reputation."[60]

In 1932, with the purpose of protecting French labour forces, the French parliament passed a law regulating the number of foreign workers who could be employed both in public and private working places. In the case of private enterprises the proportion of foreign employees had to be established according to professions and geographical regions.[61] A decree enacted on 13th March 1933 dealt only with musicians of the Seine region, and fixed the proportion of foreign musicians who could be employed in orchestras performing in hotels, cafés, cabarets,

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British History and Politics (Harmondsworth: Penguin in association with Belitha Press, 1984); Vaughan Bevan, *The Development of British Immigration Law* (Beckenham: Croom Helm, 1986); Colin Holmes, *John Bull's Island: Immigration and British Society, 1871-1971* (London: Macmillan Education, 1988). Several scholars have drawn attention to the link between immigration and racism, among others are Colin Holmes, *A Tolerant Country?: Immigrants, Refugees and Minorities in Britain* (London: Faber, 1991); Panikos Panayi, *Immigration, Ethnicity and Racism in Britain, 1815-1945* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 1994); Panikos Panayi, *An Immigration History of Britain: Multicultural Racism since 1800*, 2nd ed. (Routledge, 2014).

[60] TNA LAB 2/1189/ETAR9494/1931

[61] Loi protégeant la main d'oeuvre nationale, Journal officiel de la République française LXIV, no. 188 (12 août 1932): 8818.

restaurants, and dance clubs at 10%, regardless of the number of bands employed on the same day. There were two exceptions to this rule: first, if foreign musicians played peculiar instruments; second, if they accompanied other artists singing in a foreign language and could not be replaced by French musicians. Only in these cases, and with the approval of the Ministry of Labour, could the number of foreign musicians in an orchestra reach 30%.[62]

These measures tried to meet the demands of musicians' unions, which lamented the difficulties of French musicians had in finding employment because of the presence of foreign players, particularly in times of economic crisis. It seems that within the music scenes this matter was not seen as problematic for everyone, however. The demand of specific genres of music influenced club managers to continue employing foreign musicians and bands. A letter dated 28th January 1935 written by the Minister of Labour and addressed to the Interior Minister testifies how owners, club managers and cabarets tried to find ways to elude the measures.

The letter concerned Chez Florence, a club located in the area of Pigalle. The report found that the orchestra that performed there was formed of eight foreign musicians, six of whom had the *carte d'identité de non travailleur*. In addition, they were members of the limited liability company that owned the club through holding 31 shares of the company, in different proportions. In so doing, the managers of Chez Florence intended to ensure compliance with the 1933 decree by affirming that the six musicians were not salaried employees, but associates. As the letter reported, the African American clarinettist Willie Lewis led the band, which was known as Willie Lewis and His Entertainers and comprised other African American musicians.[63] Lewis had played with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra and had toured with it before settling in Europe in the early 1930s after the orchestra was disbanded. In Paris the band was successful and recorded for the label Swing.[64]

The Interior Minister had asked the Labour Minister to give his opinion on the situation. The latter reported that it was common to have associates who were also employees, through proof that a foreigner was an associate was not enough to ensure him or her the *carte d'identité de travailleur*. Moreover, a report of 22nd November 1934 had already revealed that the bandleader of the orchestra received a sum of money every Saturday which he divided among the members of the band, without taking into account the shares that musicians, who were supposed to be

[62] Musiciens étrangers employés dans les orchestres, Journal officiel de la République française LXV, no. 63, (15 Mars 1933): 2588.
[63] APP DA745/Musiciens
[64] Peggy Hardman, 'Lewis, William T.', Handbook of Texas Online, accessed 25 February 2017, http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/fle66.

company associates, held. This fact demonstrated that the musicians of the orchestra at the Chez Florence were employees, therefore they needed to have the *carte d'identité de travailleur* and they had to be considered within the proportion of the foreign employees described by the 1933 decree. The managers had already been condemned to pay a fine on three different occasions in 1934, but had continued to employ foreign musicians. The officer of the Minister of Labour noticed that the club managers had acted in full knowledge and that their scope was to escape all sanctions, meanwhile maintaining the orchestra formed solely by foreign musicians:

> Il semble bien d'autre part, que les dirigeants du "Florence" ont agi en toute connaissance de cause et qu'on se trouve en présence d'une manœuvre destinée à leur permettre d'échapper à toute sanction, tout en conservant un orchestra compose uniquement de musiciens étrangers.[65]

With regard to the application of measures towards foreigners, authorities wanted to avoid the intervention of foreign governments by all means. Moreover, systems of legislation could create differences that had implications on the lives of colonial migrants. In the case of France, the various distinctions between different colonial subjects were crucial and penalised colonial subject from Algeria and West Africa.[66] However, colonial subjects, unlike of foreigners, did not fear expulsions.

When cases of moral issues emerged and contrasted with commercial activities the attitude of authorities was quite prudent. In general, authorities tended to take into account the reasons that lead to the emergence of specific issues. For instance, this happened when authorities had to deal with cases of people coming from the colonies who were subject to bad or discriminatory treatment, and authorities had to face issues linked to the colour bar that involved people with a certain social position, as in the case of a complaint by a trade commissioner for Ceylon in London. In June 1939 the Colonial Office received a letter in which the commissioner lamented the owner of the Cock Tavern's refusal to serve drinks to him. The reason for the refusal given by the owner of the public house located in Great Portland Street in the West End, was that they

[65] APP DA 745/120
[66] Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*, 44–55.

did not serve coloured people in that pub. The commissioner added that he had heard of similar complaints about forms of discrimination in hotels and drinking places against Ceylonese and Indian people living in London or visiting the city as tourists. Therefore, the incident that he experienced revealed a procedure directed against a community which he thought should not be ignored. The British civil servant who received the letter admitted that they had already received complaints about colour bar difficulties by coloured visitors from colonial territories, but in this case the incident involved "a person of some position in Ceylon as in London as a representative of the Ceylon Government." This seemed to be the reason why the officer took the matter to the Home Office.[67]

However, the way in which the civil servant at the Home Office who considered the case dealt with it, reveals how authorities treated such an issue. While he labelled the incident a "sad story," he said that he could not do much, because he had no legal powers to act. Nevertheless, the Home Office was urged to further investigate the issue in order to establish whether it was a regular procedure not to serve coloured people in that pub. The inspection revealed that over the last two or three years this had become a regular occurrence. The reason that the owner gave for this system was that the place was frequented by high class customers and he did not want ladies to have any fear of molestation, for in the past there had been incidents in the club involving coloured men behaving in ways that offended white women. Thus, the owner had decided to establish the rule because otherwise "his premises would become a venue for all sorts of coloured men, desirable and undesirable, from the West End." Even though it is not possible to determine whether the owner's version was credible, the last sentence reported in the statement suggests that it was a deliberate decision not to serve coloured people in the club whatever their possible behaviour might be. As happened for a similar complaint made by a West Indian man a few months before, the only action authorities took was to send a copy of the letter to the owner of the club. The superintendent who wrote the report in his conclusion appeared to side with the owner saying that in that area of the city, public houses frequented by men of colour were "unlikely to retain a good class trade."[68]

Various cases of complaints about colour bar issues reveal that authorities tended to consider the matter when the person who wrote the complaint had a high social position. Nevertheless, this seems not to be sufficient for authorities to act against club owners and this attitude was recurrent when authorities dealt with similar issues. For instance, in January 1930 a member of

[67] TNA MEPO 2/4500/1A
[68] TNA MEPO 2/4500/6A

the parliament made a complaint about a pub in St. Andrews Street, close to Leicester Square, in which he and his Indian friend were not served drinks. In this case too, the reason given for the refusal was that they did not serve drinks to coloured people there. The police intervened after the two men protested against the way in which they had been treated in the pub, and recorded various witness statements of that revealed that the manager of the pub had started that policy ten years before as a result of troubles initiated by coloured men that used to frequent the district. The civil servants of the Home Office told the member of the parliament that he sympathised with him for the "humiliating experience," but he also minimised the issue, adding that at the basis of his complaint there was a misunderstanding of the rights that the license owner had. If he took the risk of having a complaint made against him, a licensee had the right to refuse to serve drinks to any person and to require any person to leave the premises. In this case abiding by licensing regulations licenses was more important than any possible moral issue related to discrimination. At the end of his report, the civil servant specified that he did not justify the attitude of the pub landlord, but he wanted to make clear that he could not intervene against the adoption of such a rule.[69]

As this example shows, when authorities dealt with club activities they tended not to intervene and let commercial activities make their choices, unless public order was at risk. Indeed, what concerned authorities most was public order in the cities in general, and in the entertainment scenes in particular.

[69] MEPO 2/7344/52/E/565

As Howard Becker has maintained, state intervention in art worlds is subordinated to the specific interests that it pursues.[70] In the music scenes of London and Paris the main interests were the control of the type of entertainment practised in theatres and concert halls and, above all, the preservation of public order.

I will not analyse in detail the policing of control of musical entertainment, but I want to point briefly to the fact that in both Paris and London the police and metropolitan authorities dedicated part of their job to the examination of shows in theatres, cabarets and nightclubs. Police officers in Paris made observations to establish if entertainment variants were morally acceptable. In their reports officers described the story of the show and identified the scenes and the words that required modification. For instance, in June 1915 a police report on a show at the Concert Marjal, a concert hall located close to Montmartre, after having described the story of the show, concluded by saying that it was a very vulgar of form and substance, but was not immoral.[71]

In London this kind of activity was carried out by the London Public Morality Council, a metropolitan advisory body that had been created to deal with issues of morality in the city. Formed in 1899 the London Council for the Promotion of Public Morality, later the Public Morality Council, had the scope to "combat vice and indecency" in the city. Its members included religious representatives of the Church of England, the Roman Catholic Church, Non-Conformist churches, the Jewish faith, and important personalities in medicine, education and charitable organisations.[72] In opposition to what he deemed to be a "Puritan domination," the writer Ralph Nevill in his book *Night Life. London and Paris - Past and Present*, published in 1926, affirmed that the London Public Morality Council was a further expression of the policies adopted by social reformers in the late nineteenth century.[73] In that period, the debate concerning freedom, the regulation of individual morality and societal morals was characterised by a variety of views, with two main arguments: first, the idea that the interference of society over individual sovereignty and morality through the state action was dangerous; second, the idea that only through an organized government that exercised control over society in order to

[70] Becker, *Art Worlds*, 165.
[71] APP/BA 770/873
[72] See LMA A/PMC/1/1-2
[73] Nevill, *Night Life*, 22.

prevent disorder and to impel people to act in the interest of the society, could make liberty flourish. The latter view prevailed in government institutions, and had long lasting consequences on everyday life.[74] Thus, the London Public Morality Council was the expression of the narratives, campaigns and policies driven by a specific sense of morality of professional middle classes that spread in the late nineteenth century. These policies, in Nevill's view, had damaged personal freedom and even if it was recognised that "certain evils were inseparable from the lives of great cities," drastic remedies were not adopted.[75]

Council inspections were designed to monitor the kind of musical entertainment given in cabarets and clubs, and determine whether the shows were of good character. For example, an inspection in October 1935 of the Sunday musical entertainment given at the London Hippodrome, a music hall located close to Leicester Square in the West End, declared that it was undesirable that several stories were included in the show because their substance was not morally acceptable. In a letter to the manager of the music hall, the Council specified that it had "no desire to curtail in any way the facilities for legitimate recreation and the proper enjoyment thereof," but "in the public interest the growing tendency in some quarters to give undesirable performances of indecent patter and jokes must be checked."[76] Eventually, the music hall was given a license for Sunday Entertainment provided they respected specific conditions.

Aside from the policing of musical entertainment, public order was one of the main interests that influenced states to intervene in society in general, and in the music scenes in particular. In both London and Paris, authorities gave priority to the maintenance of public order in the cities, and the police was one of the main bodies that states used for this purpose through the application of the law.[77] In France the interest in public order and stability mattered greatly during the Third Republic (1870-1940). In the late nineteenth century this interest, also linked to the fear of subversions by anarchists, communists or fascists, and the threats to the social

[74] On this see Chapter 1 of Stefan Petrow, *Policing Morals: The Metropolitan Police and the Home Office, 1870-1914* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1994), 9–27.
[75] Nevill, *Night Life*, 21–22.
[76] LMA GLC/DG/EL/03/C088/1/625
[77] Several works have analysed policing in various European countries, such as Clive Emsley and Barbara Weinberger, eds., *Policing Western Europe: Politics, Professionalism, and Public Order, 1850-1940* (Wesport: Greenwood Press, 1991); Clive Emsley, *Crime, Police, and Penal Policy: European Experiences 1750-1940* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2007); Gerald Blaney, ed., *Policing Interwar Europe - Continuity, Change and Crisis, 1918-40* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007). Studies on the police in France and Britain include Georges Carrot, *Histoire de la police française* (Paris: Tallandier, 1992); Jean-Marc Berlière, *Le monde des polices en France : XIXe-XXe siècles* (Bruxelles: Complexe, 1996); Malcolm Anderson, *In Thrall to Political Change: Police and Gendarmerie in France* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011); Michael Brogden, *The Police: Autonomy and Consent* (London and New York: Academic Press, 1982); Clive Emsley, *The English Police: A Political and Social History*, 2nd ed. (Harlow and London: Longman, 1996).

order caused by problems connected to the large amount of population living in poverty in Paris, resulted in stronger political policing with an increase of the activity of surveillance of individuals, the use of informers and the production of regular reports on public opinion performed by the police. The French police system that emerged from the Bonapartist reforms survived into the Third Republic, and was affected by political, technological and economic changes which in the interwar years contributed to render ordinary policing challenging.[78] The city of Paris had a special status with a specific division of the police controlled by the Ministry of the Interior: the Préfecture de Police, which had been created in 1800 under the government of Napoleon Bonaparte. In 1913, a process of reform divided the prefecture into three active branches: a political branch (the Renseignements généraux), which monitored political opponents and whose "active branch" performed an immigration service from 1925; a municipal branch (the Police municipal), which had the tasks of maintaining public order; and a judicial branch (the Police judiciaire), which solved crimes.[79]

Whereas in France the main interest of the state seemed to be linked to issues of political and social unrest, in the British context, authorities seemed to draw attention to moral issues, too; an aspect that was linked to the evolution of the police as an institution and the policies adopted in the nineteenth century. The London Metropolitan Police was created in 1829 through the Metropolitan Police Act[80] which replaced the locally maintained system of volunteer constables and watchmen that was ineffective in countering crime. The force reported to the Home Secretary, was organised along civilian lines, and was headed by a Commissioner. By 1914 it had become a modern police force, with many powers and a specialised bureaucracy. In the last decades of the nineteenth century, as public order was gradually obtained in a city that had grown in size and population, the activity of the police was increasingly directed towards clearly defined groups who engaged in "immoral activities."[81] At this time, the state used the police to experiment in various forms of control, using methods that included supervision, surveillance, and information-gathering. The role that the police claimed to play was law enforcement and countering illegal activities, regardless of the moral issues that were at the basis of the legislation and the variety of perceptions that officers had.[82]

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[78] Anderson, *In Thrall to Political Change*, 61–115.
[79] Berlière, *Le monde des polices en France*, 37.
[80] Metropolitan Police Act 1829 http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo4/10/44/contents
[81] See Clive Emsley, *The Great British Bobby: A History of British Policing from the 18th Century to the Present* (London: Quercus, 2009).
[82] Studies on the police and on policing have shown how this claim tended to hide the fact that the actions of the police were based on political and moral ideas that states expressed through the law. On the history of the English police and an analysis of its role as an institution see Petrow, *Policing Morals*; Emsley, *The English Police*.

In both Paris and London, city governance meant a special status because they were capitals of the state and were big cities with specific problems linked to public order. The spread of nightclubs and of black genres of music performed there, was one of the elements that raised to public order to the centre of the concerns of the state in London and Paris.

During the First World War, British authorities devoted attention to clubs. In 1915 they enacted two laws which dealt with clubs in the metropolitan area of London. The state was empowered to order clubs to close during certain hours, and only a bespoke license could exempt clubs from such a regulation and only on special occasions. Contravention of any regulations could permit authorities to declare a club illegal, and penalise the owner or manager with imprisonment of up to three months.[83] To enforce these rules, the police were given the power to inspect clubs when officers suspected that alcohol was sold or supplied illegally.[84]

After the end of the First World War in France the Préfecture de Police dealt with the issue of clubs through the ordinance of 15th March 1921 which defined regulations concerning the opening hours of drinking spaces and places for entertainment. The ordinance established that in Paris while drinking places were allowed to be opened between 4 a.m. and 2 a.m. and all night on specific public holidays, places for entertainment had to close at half past midnight unless they obtained specific authorisation from the prefecture. It is worth noting that in the neighbouring municipalities opening times were reduced.[85]

Prostitution, traffic of drugs, and drunkenness were connected to the spread of clubs and came under the jurisdiction of authorities both in London and in Paris were.[86] The introduction of specific regulations notwithstanding irregularities and illegal activities continued to occur. For instance, the London Public Morality Council identified this situation in a report dated 17th November 1925. The council members affirmed that after the Home Secretary had announced

[83] The law also established conviction in cases in which the premises were used as resort for prostitutes.
[84] Clubs (Temporary Provisions) Act, 1915 TNA MEPO 2/8512/4B; Memorandum (no.229) 3 May 1917 TNA MEPO 2/4450/144267.
[85] APP 155W 98, Ordonnance concernant L'Heure d'ouverture et de fermeture des debits de boissons et des établissements de spectacles et de divertissements publics, 15 Mars 1921.
[86] On these issues see: Petrow, *Policing Morals*, 129–293; Walkowitz, *Prostitution and Victorian Society*; Paula Bartley, *Prostitution: Prevention and Reform in England, 1860-1914* (London and New York: Routledge, 2000); Jill Harsin, *Policing Prostitution in Nineteenth-Century Paris* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1985); J. Greenaway, *Drink and British Politics Since 1830: A Study in Policy Making* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003); Henry Yeomans, *Alcohol and Moral Regulation: Public Attitudes, Spirited Measures and Victorian Hangovers* (Bristol and Chicago: Policy Press, 2014); Parssinen, *Secret Passions, Secret Remedies*; Virginia Berridge, *Opium and the People: Opiate Use and Drug Control Policy in Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Century England* (London: Free Association Books, 1999); Emmanuelle Retaillaud-Bajac, *Les Paradis Perdus: Drogues et Usagers de Drogues Dans La France de l'entre-Deux-Guerres* (Rennes: Presses Universitaires de Rennes, 2009); Howard Padwa, *Social Poison: The Culture and Politics of Opiate Control in Britain and France, 1821-1926* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press, 2012).

the introduction of specific legislation dealing with illegal activities in night clubs, there was a "surprising cessation" of some of these activities. However, the Council noted a revival of these kinds of activities; a phenomenon significantly described as an "evil." The inspectors sent to monitor the situation observed that clubs continued to be frequented by undesirable people and in many instances licensing laws were not respected. The report underlined how this was a specific problem in London, and had to be dealt with accordingly: the matter needed to be treated as a "specific evil" in certain areas and the police supervision was deemed indispensable in areas where "misconduct" was suspected."[87]

The state tried to exercise a form of control on people involved in the running of clubs through the issue of licenses. In the case of Parisian clubs, sources available in the archives show that the issue of licenses was linked to the gathering of basic personal information of the person applying. The documents that applicants were required to provide included a birth certificate, a criminal record, a certificate of good conduct, and the copy of the naturalisation order in case of foreign applicants. In addition, they had to answer a questionnaire to obtain the registration of the establishment. During the Second World War a specific committee was created in order to deal with this process, the Comité d'Organisation des Entreprises de Spectacle.[88] Further, the prefecture issued licenses for performing music shows in clubs provided that they respected the payment of taxes and reproduction rights, took measures for soundproofing and did not modify the main destination of the establishment as café or restaurant in which music had a subordinate character.[89]

In London police work seemed to be more focused on issues of moral order. A memorandum written in 1932 described how in the case of a person applying for a public house license in London, the Metropolitan Police made enquiries into his or her character and employment, thus summarising the general guidance on this matter. An inspector or sergeant of police had the task of making the enquiries which investigated back over a period of seven years in the case of people who had not held a license before, whereas if the person had already held a license a less thorough analysis was required.[90]

In some cases, managers of clubs worked in both cities, and experienced this difference at first hand. Among these was Kate Meyrick who in 1925 opened her nightclub in Paris after

[87] TNA HO 45/16205/4Y2038/5
[88] AN 19930049/4/2164 447 Cabane Cubaine
[89] APP GA 332 Boule Blanche
[90] TNA MEPO 2/7342/3A

having first owned a club in London. In her memoirs she observed how in France the police considered her differently compared with London:

> The attitude of the French police towards my activities presented a telling contrast with that of the police in London. At first, being an alien, I was inclined to be a little scared of them, but I need not have been. Far from regarding me as a notorious character, the police handed me gratuitous bouquets. One night an officer of high rank said to me, "We had a very bad report of you from London. But *we* think you are a clever person, and that you run your clubs most properly and efficiently – no fight, no quarrels, no bother of any sort. We consider you the ideal night-club proprietress."[91]

Kate Meyrick was one of the figures at the centre of the moral campaign against nightclubs in the mid 1920s in London. In the passage she recalled differing attitude of the police in Paris and London, which is an indicatication of the level of importance that moral issue played in the action of the police in Britain. The relevance of moral concerns in influencing state intervention in British society dated back to the late nineteenth century when, after moral campaigns had put pressure on the Home Secretary and the Metropolitan Police in London, more stringent regulation of prostitution, gambling and drinking had been introduced. As James Nott has noted, in the mid 1920s the Public Morality Council was one of the organisations that campaigned for an intervention to prevent immorality and to establish public control on clubs. Churches played a crucial role, notably the bishop of London Arthur Winnington-Ingram – who retained his post from 1901 to 1939, - chaired the Council and involved himself in many campaigns on moral issues. The Conservative Home Secretary William Joynson-Hicks elected in 1924 was in favour of state regulation of morality and intensified the use of the police against nightclubs. In addition, the Head of the Metropolitan Police at the time, Sir William Horwood – in charge from 1920 to 1928, - supported moral policing and believed in the role of the police for controlling beahviour within society. However, despite the pressure of the "morality lobby" on authorities, there were difficulties in approving a specific nightclub bill because it did not have

[91] Meyrick, *Secrets of the 43 Club*, 126.

full support of the Conservative party, even if the appeal to morality was a central part of its political strategy.[92]

The activities of the London police against club irregularities pursued during the 1920s with many raids against nightclubs, gave positive but short-term results. The annual report of the commissioner dated 8th January 1932 described activities of the previous year. While noting that police officers had worked well, the head of the Metropolitan Police admitted the general result of police work in 1931 was that the number of registered clubs had not differed much compared with the previous year, despite the fact that many people had been convicted and many clubs had been closed down. The commissioner maintained that these kinds of operations should be run when places became known for their bad reputation, as the police did before. The spread of clubs and the complicated investigation work and evidence gathering evidence created money wastage and focused on procedures that did not produce desired results very likely:

> I incline to the opinion that it is useless to trouble about these places until they become really notorious. The amount of money spent by our Officers in these places makes me feel quite ill, not because I think that the bills are false, but because the number of men of the type we employ strong enough not to be affected by the melancholy dissipation and the utterly reckless waste of money that goes on in these places is comparatively small.[93]

This passage shows another issue related to the attitude of officers. The commissioner clearly expressed his criticism about the low number of officers who had an adequate level of moral integrity that allowed them to resist dissolution present in some clubs. Corrupt agents had been one of the main problems during those years and demonstrates how officers as individuals played a crucial role in the governance of the urban space. The rules that the central state or the municipal authorities imposed on clubs had to be followed by club owners and managers, and police officers had the task of ensuring regulatory compliance. Therefore, the actions that

[92] James Nott, ‘`The Plague Spots of London’: William Joynson-Hicks, the Conservative Party, and the Campaign against London’s Nightclubs, 1924-29’, in *Classes, Cultures, and Politics Essays on British History for Ross McKibbin* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2011), 227–46.
[93] TNA MEPO 2/4458/52/Gen/204

officers took inside clubs had an impact on the effectiveness of the measures that authorities established.

One of the most well-known cases of bribery involved a police sergeant named George Goddard and Kate Meyrick in 1929. Goddard was charged with accepting bribes for suppressing evidence of irregularities in clubs owned by Kate Meyrick and another club owner of Italian origin Luigi Ribuffi. The two owners were charged with bribery and corruption of a police officer, and were sentenced to jail.[94] The affair had a great resonance in the British press, and several newspapers used the case to stress the situation that characterised the West End of London. For instance, an article that appeared in *The Daily Telegraph* on 30th January 1929 affirmed that scandals spread from "the strange immunity enjoyed by some of the fashionable night clubs of London:"

> These particular night clubs of Mrs. Meyrick's were not "disorderly" in other senses of the term, like some other places which also seem to have enjoyed the salaried protection of Sergeant Goddard. They were designed to exploit the insatiable craze for dancing of persons of all ages and both sexes with money to waste and boredom to dissipate to the accompaniment, when obtainable, of high-priced drinks after hours. This was the clientele which ultimately provided the Bank of England notes with which Sergeant Goddard crammed his secret safes to overflowing.

The Goddard case was described as deplorable but it was also considered to be rare, and the trial and sentence passed upon Sergeant Goddard and Kate Meyrick, the article stated, may have been intended to act as a deterrent for others:

> This trial and sentence will […] have a very salutary effect all round – with the police force, some of whose officers in special positions, are exposed to grave temptation, and on public opinion, which had begun to fear that there might be blackmail on the one side and widespread corruption on the other.[95]

[94] TNA MEPO 3/2462
[95] "Night Clubs and the Police," *The Daily Telegraph* (30 January 1929), Press Clipping, TNA MEPO 3/2462/11b

In the police annual report of January 1932 the commissioner affirmed that the intensive campaign against unregistered clubs had brought some positive results including an almost complete disappearance of bribery claims against police officers. Concomitantly, however, he finally claimed that he hoped that a legislation dealing with the issue of unregistered clubs was approved. Even if previous attempts in this direction had been dismissed, he was optimistic that, with a certain degree of pressure on the Home Secretary, a specific law dealing with clubs could be introduced.[96]

States tried to regulate the music scenes through the issue of licenses and through measures dealing with clubs, which were thus subjected to the control of the state. Nevertheless, there was a high number of clubs, which accommodated irregularities and did not register themselves, in an attempt to avoid police inspection. One consequence of this was that the state strenghtened regulatory frameworks against clubs. This was one of the elements that shows that the context of the music scenes was not stable. Maintaining public order was not an easy task because people often avoided the rules and clubs closed and re-opened very frequently.

The sources available in the archives on London make a reconstruction of how the police performed the activity of control in that context possible. The task of observation constituted a great part of the work of the investigation into clubs that the police undertook. Undercover officers spent nights in clubs in order to monitor activities, in particular gathering evidence as to whether illegal activities took place.

In some cases, undercover police officers found it difficult to be admitted into a club to conducting their task of observation and had to find other ways to gather evidence of irregularities, as it occurred in July 1933 in the Harlem Club located on New Oxford Street in the West End. A goods shop was located above the club and a small grid on the floor allowed anyone to see and listen to what was happening inside. Officers gained the confidence of the proprietor of the shop, who agreed to help them on the condition that he would not be involved in the affair. Thus, observation started with officers monitoring people entering the club (between 8 p.m. and 4 a.m.), noting if they were men or women and what drinks they ordered.

On the Goddard case see Clive Emsley, 'Sergeant Goddard: The Story of a Rotten Apple or a Diseased Orchard?', in *Crime and Culture: An Historical Perspective* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2005), 85–104

[96] TNA MEPO 2/4458/52/Gen/204

They noticed that most of the men were coloured, whilst women were all whites. They were all "well dressed and well spoken," and seemed to be people working in theatres and music halls. The reports also contained heated discussions between the manager and his employees, included a jazz band playing in the club.[97] The report described how 49 men and women entered the club on 31st July, most of whom were visitors who had gone there after a meeting organised by Nancy Cunard. The English heiress and socialist activist Nancy Cunard was a key figure in the early part of the twentieth century who contributed to the valorisation of black forms of art. Her relationship with the African American pianist Henry Crowder led to a rupture with her family who did not accept her activities. In 1928 in Paris she founded the avant-garde publishing house the Hours Press, then travelled for research to Harlem, Cuba, and Jamaica. The journey was important for her elaboration of blackness as a transnational concept, which found its celebration with the publication of the anthology *Negro* in 1934, dedicated to the achievements of people of African descent.[98]

After seven nights of observation, the club was finally raided by the police on 1st August 1933. The police officers attached a flyer to the report on the club; an invitation to a pub located in King's Cross for "interracial dance" and for a meeting on the cases of Scottsboro and Meerut. The Scottsboro case regarded a group of African American boys accused of rape in Alabama in 1931, which received international attention and a campaign for a fair trial. During her trip to the United Stated in that year Nancy Cunard became interested in the Scottsboro case and actively supported the boys. When back in Europe, she played a crucial role in the British campaign of support for them. The Meerut case began in British India in 1929 and involved several trade unionists, among them three English people, convicted of organising a railway strike, many of them on false accusations.[99] The fact that the police attached the flyer to the report is significant because it reveals how clubs were spaces in which interracial encounters took place through leisure activities ("interracial dance") but also through political activism regarding racial issues such as the meeting on the two international campaigns.

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[97] TNA MEPO 2/4507/5A

[98] On Nancy Cunard see Lois Gordon, *Nancy Cunard: Heiress, Muse, Political Idealist* (New York and Chichester: Columbia University Press, 2007).

[99] On the two cases and on their relevance in Britain's public campaigns see: Dan T. Carter, *Scottsboro: A Tragedy of the American South* (Baton Rouge: Louisiana University Press, 1979); Devendra Singh, *Meerut Conspiracy Case and the Communist Movement in India 1929 - 1935* (Meerut: Research India Publication, 1990); James R. Acker, *Scottsboro and Its Legacy: The Cases That Challenged American Legal and Social Justice* (New York: Praeger, 2007); Susan D. Pennybacker, *From Scottsboro to Munich: Race and Political Culture in 1930s Britain* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

Authorities were especially concerned with so-called "bottle parties." They were hosted in clubs and usually began after closing hours, and lasted until early morning. At these events, guests had an invitation and paid money to enter the club. The drinks that they ordered were typically supplied by a wine store in the neighbourhood. These kinds of stores held off-licenses for selling liquor, and guests usually ordered drinks beforehand, during permitted hours, which were delivered during non-permitted hours. Thus, through this system clubs tried to avoid licensing laws claiming that they did not supply liquor to the clients after closing hours and that parties were held on private premises.

In the mid 1930s bottle parties had already spread throughout the West End. The Home Office deemed the phenomenon to have originated between 1931-1932, but only in 1934 did it became a serious issue. Authorities monitored the growth of bottle parties and a 1938 report showed this increase. In January 1934 there were 6 known bottle parties, in May 1935 the number had increased to 31 and in June 1937 they registered 37 known bottle parties. In addition, the figures underlined how bottle parties opened and closed very rapidly. The report made a list of these parties with the addresses of the premises, the date when they opened, and the type of offence committed, such as illegal selling of liquor and providing entertainment with music and dancing without a license. The document also described the ways in which they functioned, and differentiated between a few high class places which were well-appointed, provided good entertainment, and were "patronised partly by respectable people who get a kick out of doing something which may be unlawful or watching undressed women posturing on a stage" and "partly by women of the superior prostitute class;" places that staged an expensive cabaret but without license and received many complaints for that reason; and lower class places that were "no more than underground dens," which were "patronised mainly by prostitutes, men of bad character and other people living on their wits in the West End of London, with a sprinkling of respectable people who are likely to be relieved of their money."[100]

In March 1934 a column appeared on the newspaper *The Morning Post*, which described how bottle parties had spread in the West End especially after police raids on nightclubs. The successful system of bottle parties had become the standard in the district. Initially they were private parties and it was necessary to know one of the hosts personally, but afterwards one could acquire an invitation card at the door and, after signing an order form provided by a specific wine store, they could obtain the amount of drink needed.[101]

[100] TNA HO 45/18488/598822/39
[101] "'Bottle Parties' – New Style," *The Morning Post* (7 March 1934), TNA MEPO 2/4499/34A

In his guide to Soho, the journalist Stanley Jackson gave a colourful description of bottle parties:

> They open at 11 p.m. and close at 5 a.m. The lighting is dim, the music sweet, the prices stiff. […] You can dance all night, submit your liver to liquor of mostly unknown sources and peer through the gloom at one or two well-known Stage faces. The dim lighting gives that intimate aphrodisiacal atmosphere but it also helps the waiter who, if you and your friends have had a sufficiency of drink, may quietly slip each of you the bill! The membership of a Soho bottle party can be secured without a recommendation from a bank manager, a solicitor or a bishop; you merely sign a form in advance ordering the liquor you require.[102]

A police report compiled in November 1933 on the Old Florida club, located in Mayfair, dealt with the matter of bottle parties. Police investigations and the proceedings against the club notwithstanding, bottle parties at the Old Florida continued to be organised. The report underlined how these events occurred in five other clubs of the West End, with the same system. Even if it was evident that these places did not respect the law, the report emphasised that the police could not intervene against them until the court gave a clear decision on the Old Florida case. The same magistrate was examining a police appeal against the decision to dismiss summonses against the club owners and the appeal of the proprietors against their conviction, a fact that testifies the high degree of legal uncertainty.[103] Nevertheless, as soon as he received the report, the Commissioner ordered action to be taken against those five clubs without waiting for the result of the appeal. It was "an absurd thing," he wrote, that the police "should sit down and do nothing in regard to these new Bottle Parties that are being started."[104]

In the early 1930s police action against clubs was quite considerable. In view of a forthcoming meeting with the Chief Constable Sir Francis Griffith, the Commissioner on 17th October 1933 sent a confidential letter in which he asked his subordinate officers to answer to a series of questions concerning police actions that had taken in London to nightclubs. His requests arose from the observation of an escalation of raids against nightclubs in the West End

[102] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 93.
[103] TNA MEPO 2/4499/1A
[104] TNA MEPO 2/4499/1B

over the previous months, which contrasted with his indication of police actions as only present in specific cases when nightclub activities provoked public scandal.[105]

The report compiled to answer Griffith's requests stated that out of 2,344 registered clubs in 1933 only 7% could be considered respectable, with the majority athletic clubs, working men's clubs, and local political clubs. There were 30 nightclubs "of a good type" which were regularly granted legal exemption, whereas the number of clubs deemed "doubtful and disreputable" was higher. Doubtful clubs were those places in which "small infringements of the law are regularly occurring," such as illegal liquor sale, and the police had identified 375 "doubtful" clubs (16%). Authorities had defined 50 "disreputable" clubs in that year because of their previous history and the people involved in their management.[106]

Another issue that arose was linked to the amount of work police officers dedicated to surveillance. The report stated that the two officers were given the task of conducting inside observation in preparation for entering the club which lasted six days. In total, it was calculated that during the previous year there had been approximatively 840 days of work for this task, which dealt with clubs that were investigated for irregularities. This should be added to those cases in which inside observation had occurred with no subsequent prosecution. The doubts that emerged surrounded the effective results obtained through the amount activity performed by the police.[107]

These doubts notwithstanding, police action against clubs continued, and was often supported by complaints from the public, which reported what happened inside nightclubs. The police received letters with which people denounced club irregularities, bottle parties and immorality. For instance, in 1932 one individual reported on the Slip In Club, located in Regent Street. His tough words were written on a flyer, which announced that the club held a bottle party every evening and invited people to come:

> I think it is a scandalous thing that such a club should be allowed in this country. If an act of Parliament is necessary it should be passed at once.[108]

[105] TNA MEPO/2/4458/33
[106] TNA MEPO/2/4458/33C
[107] TNA MEPO/2/4458/33
[108] TNA MEPO 2/4482/52

In most cases, letters that the police received underlined the low level of morality in clubs. This emerges, for instance, from the complaints that citizens sent to the police about the Shim Sham Club in Wardour Street. The Shim Sham was opened on 28th February 1935 by Jack Isow, a Polish Jew club manager and entrepreneur, and the African American singer Ike Hatch who had arrived in London from New York in 1925 and had started playing in various clubs of the West End. The Shim Sham was located above the Majestic Billiard Hall that Isow run. The club was unregistered and provided drinking through the bottle party system. It was named after the American dance Shim Sham, and on its big dance floor a mixed clientele danced to the rhythm of swing music.[109] The influence of Hatch was fundamental in recreating an atmosphere similar to that of Harlem clubs. Several descriptions of the club noted these similarities. In 1936 Rudolph Dunbar in an article published in the *Melody Maker* defined the club "Harlem in London." As one of the main events that constituted a "year of advancement for Negroes," the Shim Sham represented "the new outlook on the colour question" especially because of the interracial dances that took place inside the club.[110] In 1937 another article stated that the Shim Sham was a fine club and "London's nearest approach to New York's famous Cotton Club." The author described the mixed band playing there and the "cosmopolitan crowd at the tables." These elements created an "atmosphere of somewhere far from London;" and entering the club was like "slipping out of London and into an American and Continental hot swing spot."[111]

A few months later the opening night - which featured Trinidadian drummer George "Happy" Blake's band, - the police started the work of undercover observation inside the unregistered club as a police report suggested on 27th April 1935 after to a series of irregularities committed there especially regarding illegal sell of liquors. The report suggested that the club was frequented mainly by prostitutes and coloured men.[112] While police officers carried on the activity of observation, letters of complaint about the Shim Sham Club sent to the police regarded the low level of morality inside the club. With an anonymous letter dated 14th May 1935 and addressed to the Commissioner of Police of New Scotland Yard, a person living in the club's neighbourhood denounced the activities of the Shim Sham using harsh language, highlighting what he deemed to be indecent behaviour:

[109] Walkowitz, *Nights Out*, 235–38.
[110] Rudolph Dunbar, "Harlem in London. Year of Advancement for Negroes. Significance of the Shim-Sham," *Melody Maker* XII, no.146 (7 March 1936): 2
[111] Andrew Gray, "ANDREW GRAY, Our Special Reporter, doing the rounds of London's After-dark Swing Spots comes to the Shim Sham," *Melody Maker* XIII no. 207 (8 May 1937): 2.
[112] TNA MEPO 2/4494/29

> In the Shim Sham there is a negro band, white women carrying on perversion, women with women, men with men […]. The noise when they leave the club, in the early hours of the morning, 4-5 a.m., is disgusting, kicking buckets over, and dustbins. I made my business to enquire, and I can tell you sir, it is nothing else than a den of vice and iniquity. They are harbouring prostitutes, a rendezvous of lesbians and men living on the immoral earnings of women. The staff consists of well known criminals to the police […] and some obnoxious things happen in the cloakrooms for a meagre tip, men and women go into the same lavatory, and men and men going into one lavatory.[113]

The insistence on several aspects such as sexual promiscuity (especially of women) and homosexuality, suggests that it was likely that the writer was a man. The reference to the band formed by coloured musicians and "white women carrying on perversion" is indicative of the association he made between black music and what was frequently deemed "indecent" behaviour of women. Thus, noise, criminality (prostitution and criminals employed on the staff), and immoral behavior influenced the writer to define the club as "nothing else than a den of vice and iniquity." At the end of the letter the man explained his reasons for writing to the police saying that he did not want to create trouble but he considered the situation so disgusting that he thought it was his duty to denounce it.

The next day, on 15th May 1935, another anonymous letter denounced the Shim Sham club as a place where immoral activities took place. This letter was directed to Westminster Town Hall. In this case too, the writer underlined the degradation of the club and introduced the name of the proprietor of the club:

> A place of infame, frequented by criminals, prostitutes, a rendezvous for homosexual perverters, the same owner known as Jack Isow, otherwise Schwitzky and alien, the language is terrible in the early hours of the morning.

[113] TNA MEPO 2/4494/210

The fact that the writer described the owner as "alien" and the remarks he made about the language used by people frequenting the club suggests that he was a British man of manners. The man, who was from the suburbs, had recently visited the Shim Sham and was disgusted by what happened to him while leaving the club:

> On leaving the club, the reception clerk asked me whether I was looking for a nice woman during the cabaret, a man accosted me, I was so disgusted that I made enquiries, to ascertain all particulars, I cannot imagine that such perversion could be in a city like this. [114]

This last comment about the "perversion" that he found in London gives us an indication of the different image a person coming from outside the centre could have had of a metropolis like London. More generally, this language is illustrative of the strength that moral issues had in the society. The mid-nineteenth century had been characterised by the development of moral policies and reforms devoted to the creation of a society where citizens followed values of respectability. In order to contrast vice and disorder, Victorian reformers discouraged and suppressed immoral behaviour, especially in the sexual sphere, and directed their efforts in particular towards the lower classes. These policies found practical application in the form of repressive measures such as those directed against obscenity, homosexual practices, and censorship. Even if a transformation of policies took place in the early twentieth century and the interwar years, which placed social hygiene at its core, the echo of specific ideas on morality had lasting effects, which influenced the writer of the letter on the Shim Sham to use a word such as "perversion".[115] However, in many cases the attitudes that people had were ambivalent. Indeed, despite the disgust that he felt the first time he was in the club, the man made a second visit to the Shim Sham, during which he was invited to play a card game and went to another place located below its premises:

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[114] TNA MEPO 2/4494/112

[115] On the evolution of these policies see Alan Hunt, *Governing Morals: A Social History of Moral Regulation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999); Frank Mort, *Dangerous Sexualities: Medico-Moral Politics in England Since 1830*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2000).

> On a second visit I was pulled by a man on the stairs, and asked me whether I would care to play a game of cards, suggesting stud poker or rummy, and was taken in a cubicle of the floor below in a billiard club called the Majestic, I did not like the look of the people inside [….] I would have informed the police, but I cannot afford my name being mixed up.[116]

In the previous letter analysed, the writer openly wrote that he thought it was his duty to inform the police without making reference to the possibility of denouncing the facts in person. However, in this case the man implied that he decided not to contact the police immediately because he could not face the risk of being involved in the matter.

Another letter dated 6th June 1935 reported the theft of a woman's handbag in the Shim Sham. Linking immorality with criminality, the writer said that he was not surprised that the unfortunate event occurred in the club "considering the number of undesirable people" who he saw there, and the "villains, black and white" frequenting a club where drinks were served quite freely and where "disgusting scenes" took place.[117]

A similar kind of letter was received by the police in October 1937. A man visiting London spent a night at the Paradise Club located in Regent Street and found what he saw so disgusting that he decided to report it to the police. The elements that he underlined were immorality, naked women dancing, and evilness because the place was frequented by criminals:

> What I saw there was most repulsive, practically a naked young girl doing a fan dance and stripped herself from the little she was wearing. It is nothing but a hotbed of 'gentlemen' crooks, prostitutes, the whole place savours of evilness and immorality.

The writer mentioned the name of the club's owner, and specified that he was a Jew and that the "he hides himself and pushes forward his manager." The club was such a degenerate place

[116] TNA MEPO 2/4494/112
[117] TNA MEPO 2/4494/52

that the man called for its closure. He added that he visited another club in the area and it was also bad. This influenced him add more general comments about the situation of the whole area of the West End and ask authorities to take action against what was happening:

> What a shocking state of affairs to be sure in the West End of London. Exercise your powers and stop this awful traffic. From a disgusted Visitor.

Interestingly, together with the man's letter there was another letter of complaint that his wife wrote about the Paradise Club. From the letter it seems that the man went to the club on his own and when he came back home drunk he confessed that he had been there. The complaints the woman made regarded the presence of naked women and the place was degraded:

> My husband when in drink admitted that he visited the Paradise Club, Regent St. London. W. a Night Club where the visitors were shown a number of naked women also 'strip tease' exhibitions. Most disgusting. These attractions are presented nightly. Stop this filth at once. The Club I understand is run by a young depraved jew by the name of Reggie Levy.[118]

The harsh language used by the woman who urged the police to put an end to the degradation and who described the manager as a "young depraved jew" is similar to the tone of the letter written by her husband. Nevertheless, the incipit of the extract shows the man had "admitted" spending the night in the club when he was drunk, which gives the impression that his attitude towards these kinds of places and this form of entertainment was at least ambiguous.

In some cases, letters of complaint were sent by rival owners of clubs. For instance, on 3 June 1935 a proprietor of a club located in the same district as the Shim Sham sent a letter of complaint to the County Hall of Westminster. He decided to remain anonymous and signed the

[118] TNA MEPO 3/941/3C

letter, "an Englishman." In the letter he reported how the Shim Sham did not respect the regulations in place at the time, by making people pay for admittance and serving drinks to its clients. For these reasons, he stated, the police should intervene against the club.[119]

From the language used in the letters of complaint the police received, we can assume that in most cases they were written by people belonging in the upper or middle classes. However, the police also received complaints by working class people who reported the disparity of treatment that they experienced in some drinking places. In particular, an anonymous letter sent to the police in 1934 made reference to the Adelphi Hotel in the West End as a place where this kind of treatment happened:

> Dear Sir, you would like to know no doubt that people with money can get a drink at any time especially, in the afternoon, whereas a working peson [sic] cannot.[120]

This demonstrates how different people considered complaints made to the police a tool through which their voice could been heard. Moreover, it also shows how the state intervention was subjected to the pressure that specific groups put on authorities, including members of the parliament, organisations representing specific categories such as hotels and restaurants and musicians' unions, but also private citizens. Significantly, letters of complaint were typically among the material on which the police based their operations against clubs.

The situation regarding nightclubs concerned authorities and in 1936 the proposals on the possibility of changing the legislation on clubs started became more concrete. The debate led to the proposed provisions of this Clubs Bill dealing with clubs in London and provincial areas. The measures addressed various aspects. First, the registration of clubs should be done through an application that in the case of London had to be approved by the Clerk of the Metropolitan Police. At the beginning of each year clubs had to make a statement in which they inform the authorities if any changes occurred. In addition, clubs obtained permission to sell liquors only after the registration had been accepted. Second, other measures regarded the procedures for prosecuting clubs and added further conditions for the closure of clubs, including the cases in

[119] TNA MEPO 2/4494/12G
[120] TNA MEPO 2/4505/4A

which the person had been convicted or was unfit to take part in the management of the club; when the club was used as a resort for criminals or persons of bad character; and if there was reasonable ground for supposing that the club would not be conducted in a good way or was formed for an unlawful purpose. Finally, the law made it easier for the police to obtain a warrant authorising entry into a club.[121]

However, the measures described in this proposed bill did not seem enough for some people involved in the debate. For instance, a solicitor wrote some observations on the outline of the bill on 31st January 1938, highlighting a series of proposals that had not been included in the proposed bill. The solicitor wrote that it seemed necessary to put pressure on authorities to insert more restrictive measures concerning various issues such as the suitability of the premises and the prohibition of off-sales.[122]

Despite this kind of pressure, the approval of the legislation was not considered a priority by the government. In a June 1938 parliamentary debate, a Lord asked the government about the date on which the bill would be presented reminding "the very great urgency in connection with the provision of this legislation which arises from the present state of the law with regard to clubs." The Lord did not understand the delay which was taking place; regarding the introduction of the bill, a measure which had "behind it an exceptional weight of public opinion in the country." The government responded that even if it was the intention of the government to introduce a bill on the subject, it was not possible to provide certainties as to whether the legislation would be discussed.[123]

The call for a legislation on clubs came also on the part of organisations representing hotels and restaurants. For instance, a memorandum dated 3rd March 1938 and written by The Hotels and Restaurants Association of Great Britain addressed the issue of bottle parties in London. The description of the system of bottle parties testifies to how it had proliferated and represented one of the main forms of entertainment:

> There is no doubt that the Bottle Party system is within the law if certain stringent conditions are observed. It is equally beyond question that the profits accruing to the proprietors of the more popular Bottle Parties are so great that it is useless to attack the system by trifling prosecutions, which, even if successful, would only lead to the infliction

[121] TNA MEPO 2/4471/4A; MEPO 2/4471/4B
[122] TNA MEPO 2/4471/5A
[123] Extracts from Parliamentary Debates of 23/6/1938, TNA MEPO 2/4471/12B

> of trifling fines. […] The system is too strongly established to be affected by such matters as these.[124]

The document continued by assessing that the largest bottle parties, which were usually strictly run, were the most difficult to attack, whereas most were small and more vulnerable because they aimed at obtaining large profits in a short time and thus were frequently organised without respecting the law. Nevertheless, the memorandum stated that, if attainable, the end of the system would come from a specific legislation on clubs.

At the beginning of the Second World War, bottle parties continued to be at the centre of the attention of the police. In a report dated 7th November 1939, the inspector of the "C" Division, which covered Mayfair and Soho, made a list of establishments hosting bottle parties. The list included 22 clubs and the inspector distinguished between better class and lower class establishments. Eight of them were among the former. They gave "some reasonable good class entertainment" and served liquors, made an effort to respect the law and had mostly a regular clientele. The other clubs of low class offered dancing and in some cases "very third rate cabaret;" their premises were scruffy and dark. One of the common elements to all bottle parties was the presence of young dance hostesses whose job was to dance with male clients. In addition to the call for a specific regulations prohibiting the sale of liquor after closing times and for the strengthening of police powers against clubs, the inspector wrote that the extension of opening hours of restaurants and hotels in the West End to 2 or 3 a.m. was likely to have a negative impact on those clubs hosting bottle parties.[125]

With two letters dated 16th November 1939 and 10th January 1940 and addressed to the Home Office and the Commissioner of Police respectively, the Town Clerk of the Westminster City Hall wanted to highlight the increase of the number of bottle parties in the West End. From the information the Committee had, after the outbreak of the war various bottle parties had opened and others continued to operate. As they were becoming better known and stronger financially and their increase was likely to last, it was desirable that the proprietors of bottle parties were subject to the same regulations as proprietors of license premises. Therefore, it was necessary to put pressure on authorities to deal with the matter.[126]

[124] TNA HO 45/18488/598822/51
[125] TNA MEPO 2/8512/3B
[126] TNA HO 45/18488/598822/70

During the hostilities authorities continued to receive letters of complaint against clubs and the kind of entertainment they offered. In a period of suffering and difficulties, people writing to the police lamented the fact that they did not stop the nightclub activities and the proliferation of bottle parties, as the following extract of a letter written in June 1940 shows. In a similar way to other letters of complaint, the writer pointed to the lack of morality covered by "a cloak of apparent respectability" that characterised nightclubs, which were places frequented by wealthy men who spent money drinking, and dissolute women:

> There is a war on – and we fail to understand why you allow Night Clubs and Bottle Parties to flourish. All carried on under a cloak of apparent respectability, they are nothing but Drinking Dens and Immorality rife. Rich Men with money to burn and Degraded Women are the patrons nightly of these horrible places.

The writer continued by saying that the police were aware of the situation but people corrupted them in order not to avoid prosecution. As those places were considered to provoke degradation, especially during the war period, he urged the police to stop the situation:

> The police know this well but they are bribed to keep their eyes shut. It is all done slyly quit, and should be stopped at once. Nothing but Drink and Dissipation and is a positive disgrace during this war period.

The letter was intended to report one club in particular, El Morocco Club, located in Mayfair, which frequently hosted bottle parties. The club owner had been to prison for seven years and employed another run the club in his place. In addition to the call for the closure of the club, the writer wanted to underline how in time of war, the spread of places like nightclubs clashed with the needs the country had for the war effort:

> Our Country are crying out for money, and useful labour for men and women. We find these places flourishing of the 'get rich quick' kind. All the people that patronize them don't care a damn.[127]

It was in the context of the war that the government finally took measures to deal with the issue of nightclubs and bottle parties. In March 1940 the Hotels and Restaurants Association of Great Britain urged the government to take some actions to deal with the issue, also considering the special powers it had in times of war.

> It is time some steps were taken to deal with this abuse. The Association is advised that the Government already possess adequate statutory power under the Emergency Powers (Defence) Act 1939, and it is hoped that, in view of the strong expression of opinion against "bottle parties" in past reports by the Commissioner, representations will be made to the Home Office urging that the evil should be dealt with without delay.[128]

In 1940 an integration to the Emergency Power (Defence) Act, enacted the year before, established that the police were allowed to close undesirable premises (unregistered clubs and clubs without licence for public entertainment) under certain circumstances including disrespect of operating hours, making clients pay for admission, providing entertainment of a "demoralising character," admitting criminals, prostitutes and allowing people perform indecent behaviour.[129]

A police document on bottle parties redacted on 27th March 1942 reported that after closing orders had been made against twenty bottle parties, only six establishments of better class had survived. The police warned some of these clubs to adopt measures to prevent drunkenness on their premises, but observations showed that these warnings did not produce successful results. Even if the report considered that it was difficult for managers to deal with the issue of drunkenness, it was necessary to establish what policy to adopt. The problem of drunkenness

[127] TNA MEPO 2/4501/6A
[128] TNA MEPO 2/4454/1A
[129] TNA MEPO 2/8512/33A

had acquired further importance during the hostilities, and the fact that many officers of the Army frequented bottle parties, both on leave and in active duty, was considered problematic because in case of a sudden emergency they would not be in the right condition for combat.[130]

In both Britain and France, the spread of clubs in specific areas of London and Paris were at the centre of concerns that states had about public order, as these places were often characterised by a coexistence of entertainment and criminal activities such as prostitution and gambling. Thus, states tried to control activities in clubs and to combat illegal behaviour through legislation and police work; a situation that they continued with difficulty and that did not often produce lasting results. This was also due to the intrinsic difficulties of applying legislation to a phenomenon such as new forms of entertainment that were expanding with the development of big cities, as the British journalist Sidney Felstead wondered in 1923 in his book *The Underworld of London*:

> London is trying to grow good. […] The law is trying to make us all good boys and girls, trying to send us home to our beds before midnight. In the hope that the night life of the greatest city in the world will gradually disappear. Where is it all going to end? Will these parasites of society disappear for good in the face of law's strictures?[131]

When authorities were confronted with issues that were perceived as threats to public order and social morality, they had to face the fact that it was unlikely that legislation would quickly lead to the disappearance of phenomena such as gambling, prostitution, and drinking which were widespread in society. In addition, in the debate, ideas of individual freedom and the reality of economics contrasted with imperatives on morality. However, the need to find solutions to issue of public order forced them to intervene with restrictive measures, which generated inconsistent results.[132]

[130] TNA MEPO 2/8512/40C
[131] Felstead, *The Underworld of London*, 23–24.
[132] In the case of Great Britain this was already an issue during the Victorian period, see Chaper 10, Geoffrey Russell Searle, *Morality and the Market in Victorian Britain* (Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1998), 219–52.

This chapter has examined the influence that state regulation had on the music scenes of London and Paris. In both cases, the two cities were regulated by special police units (Préfecture de Police in Paris and the Metropolitan Police in London) and by a specific legislation that treated them differently from other parts of the countries. Several laws regarded only the two cities or were initially applied in the capitals and later extended to the rest of the country. This is significant for it reveals how the government of big metropolises regarded specific issues linked to their role as capitals and centres of the entertainment industry.

The chapter has shown how state action was subjected to the pressure that specific groups put on authorities in face of the changes occurring in the music industry after the First World War, especially linked to mechanisation of music, unstable working conditions and low salaries in a labour market which lacked regulation. In both Britain and France Musicians' unions responded to this increasing insecurity by putting pressure on authorities for protecting British and French musicians from unemployment. Their complaints mostly concerned the employment of foreign musicians, especially American musicians. With the vogue for American music and the employment of foreign bands to meet the demand, foreign competition was considered one of the main reasons for native musicians' difficulties. Significantly, in several cases complaints concerned musicians or bands of low level, while high level musicians were considered differently, a fact that suggests that musicians' talent and quality was a significant element in the debate. Eventually authorities introduced specific laws limiting the presence of foreign workers in entertainment (e.g. 1932-33 laws limiting to 10% foreign musicians playing in bands in France). However, the everyday application of the law encountered difficulties as it had to deal with club managers who tried to evade provisions. In the British case, the lack of reciprocity with the American Federation of Musicians led to the establishments of restrictions against the arrival of American musicians in Britain which would only end in the mid 1950s.

Moreover, the analysis has revealed how authorities were more concerned with the maintenance of public order in the cities which they regulated through a system of licenses and police monitoring of spaces for entertainment. While in France authorities seemed to be more concerned with individual surveillance and political activities in a context characterised by the presence of radical groups in Paris,[133] in Britain issues of moral order influenced the policing of the music scenes, with moral campaigns, increasing restrictions and raids against irregular

[133] Goebel, *Anti-Imperial Metropolis*.

clubs even if with not lasting results. This difference in the governance of the cities suggests that in the interwar years the urban environment of Paris granted more favourable conditions for the spreading of black genres of music because of a less strict policing of urban spaces and the ongoing opening to American musicians, the restricting laws on foreign musicians notwithstanding.

Chapter 6

Modulations: Changes and Continuities in the Music Scenes in the Post-War Years

Soho is a tight-packed world of its own
but with a thousand different moods and faces.
You will hear its heart beating in a little restaurant kitchen,
in a café bar, in a pub or a club, behind a shop counter,
in a whispered phrase on a street corner.
After a while, I gave up trying to find a smooth,
neat pattern for this strange world of contrasts.
Too often my placid conclusions were rippled
by strange faces and human oddities.[1]

Stanley Jackson
An Indiscreet Guide to Soho
(1946)

Un tel changement ne s'était pas produit brutalement,
du jour au lendemain, comme notre isolement
pendant la guerre aurait pu nous le faire croire.
Comme toute évolution artistique,
celle-ci avait connu une lente incubation.
On dit que certaines idées sont "dans l'air."
Le be-bop était dans l'air.[2]

Charles Delaunay
Delaunay's dilemma. De la peinture au jazz
(1985)

Throughout the history of pop music development has consistently involved both continuity and change. Each set of preferences which has been perceived, at the time or with hindsight, as crystallising a new tradition, invariably blends new elements or structures with recycled ones. Thus the transformation of one or more traditions typically combines the exploitation of and contributions to existing traditions.[3]

[1] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 25.
[2] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 165–66.
[3] David Hatch and Stephen Millward, *From Blues to Rock: An Analytical History of Pop Music* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1987), 42.

With these words, David Hatch and Stephen Millward have affirmed the importance of continuities and changes in historical research on popular music. This claim can be extended to music in general, in line with what ethnomusicologist Jonathan Stock has written: "many of the changes in twentieth-century music-making can be explained as tending towards the ensuring of musical continuity. […] Not all is change."[4]

Studies on black genres of music in the interwar years, especially jazz, are in most of the cases separated from studies that examine the post-war years.[5] The historical development of musical genres may contribute to this, with the attention concentrated, for instance, on the Jazz Age, as this was when jazz was extremely popular, which declined in the 1950s.[6] This chapter contributes to fill this gap, and considers the post-war years as crucial because of the social and musical changes but also elements of continuity with the previous decades that would be fundamental for the following years. I conceive this relationship between changes and continuity in a broad sense, not only in musical terms, but also at a social level. I take into consideration those elements, such as movements of people, urban spaces, state policies, which I have analysed in previous chapters and which in the post-war years marked a change or were in continuity with the previous years, in a process that in many cases is not characterised by any dichotomy between change and continuity, but it involves both.

The first section of the chapter explores the movements of musicians who were active in the music scenes of Paris and London during the Second World War and its aftermath. The war was an event that marked a change for music. Those who stayed in the cities during the conflict experienced many difficulties, and those who left and returned after hostilities found the cities changed. However, the war also brought new genres of music, especially from American servicemen, a presence that also influenced race relations. These movements of people were at the basis of new music genres that spread in both cities.

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[4] Jonathan Stock, 'Peripheries and Interfaces: The Western Impact on Other Music', in *The Cambridge History of Twentieth-Century Music*, vol. 1 (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 36.

[5] Among the studies on the post-war years see for instance: Stratton and Zuberi, *Black Popular Music in Britain*; Tom Perchard, *After Django: Making Jazz in Postwar France* (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2015); Rashida K. Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas: Race, Music, and Migration in Post-World War II Paris* (Oakland: University of California Press, 2016); Elizabeth Vihlen McGregor, *Jazz and Postwar French Identity: Improvising the Nation* (Lanham and London: Lexington Books, 2016).

[6] An important exception in this sense is the volume: Toynbee, Tackley, and Doffman, *Black British Jazz*. The scholars adopted a perspective extended to the late nineteenth century, affirming the important idea changes and evolution in a process of continuity.

The second section of the chapter devotes attention to the new waves of migration from the Caribbean of the post-war years. These movements of people, too, were at the basis of the spread of black genres of music, especially calypso. The governments of both Britain and France introduced of legislative measures with the aim of reinforcing the link with their territories overseas after the war. These measures had consequences on movements from the Caribbean and the first wave of mass migration from the Caribbean marked a change in British history. The integration of immigrants brought changes and problems in the urban space, including spatial segregation and disorder.

Changes and continuities that occurred in the urban music scenes are examined in the third section of the chapter. The West End continued to be the area where new musical developments found the spaces where to spread, while in Paris the spaces where the new music was produced shifted mostly to the Left Bank. Moreover, even if after the war, new spaces gained popularity such as coffee-bars, and, in Paris the *caves* (underground clubs), there was a continuity in the types of places where new genres developed, especially small clubs. The state dealt with clubs in a similar way to the pre-war period, by implementing a system of licenses and inside observation to monitor entertainment provided by clubs, and aimed to preserve public order.

The fourth section of the chapter deals with the musical innovations that occurred in the post-war period, and draws attention to the process of opening to new influences. Festivals were significant in this sense, especially in France. A figure such as Charles Delaunay who emerged in the music scene in the mid 1930s, played a crucial role in the post-war period, in the promotion of new genres of music both in France and across the Channel. In Britain, however, there was no consistent policy of openness, and the Musicians' Union upheld the ban towards foreign musicians - above all Americans - due to the lack of reciprocity with cognate foreign organisations. Despite this, thanks to the action of musicians and producers, the music scene was lively.

The demand for black styles of music continued to be high during the 1940s, and therefore it further stimulated movements of musicians who searched for opportunities to work in the music scenes of Paris and London. Still, the effects of the economic crisis of the early 1930s, and above all the outbreak of the Second World War at the end of that decade, caused difficulties for musicians, as Leslie Thompson recalled:

> When the war was declared in September 1939 all the theatres closed. There was the blackout, fear of bombing, and the call up [draft] which reduced the ranks of staff, stage hands, orchestras, and turns.[7]

In many cases foreign musicians decided to leave the country with the advent of the war. For example, the Cuban singer Antonio Machín left Paris in late 1939. Machín had arrived in the city in 1936. His career had led him to move from Cuba to New York where he played with the Cuban Don Azpiazu's orchestra, and became a well-known musician. In 1935 he was offered employment by the English impresario Charles B. Cochran, so he left the United States and went to London. After working there for one year, he moved to Paris, where he soon integrated into the Montmartre musical scene. Three years later, following the outbreak of the war in Poland he chose to leave Paris and moved to Spain.[8]

For those musicians who also had a business activity, the decision to leave was an even more difficult choice. The club manager Bricktop recalled how she did not want to leave Paris, despite the American consulate's insistence that US citizens leave France. She eventually boarded the last ship to sail to America in October 1939.[9] Also the manager Eugene Bullard affirmed that he had no thought of leaving France. When hostilities began he continued the espionage work for the French government that he had started in early 1939, and helped musicians and performers who were experiencing difficult times in Paris by providing food for

[7] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 105.
[8] Eduardo Jover, *Machín. Toda una vida* (Madrid: La Esfera de los Libros, 2002), 134–42.
[9] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 201–2.

them in his bar. Following the German invasion Bullard joined his old regiment in which he had fought during WWI, but, shortly afterwards, he was wounded and in 1940 he sailed for New York from Spain.[10]

When the Second World War broke out, nightlife in Paris stopped and musicians found themselves in a difficult situation. As the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens reported in 1939 those months were hard for musicians who were unemploymed. The Syndicat provided ad hoc assistance for musicians who lost their jobs, by providing them with free meals. Nevertheless, after the first months of war the situation improved; nightlife partially restarted and musicians could get more jobs, especially because various dance clubs had reopened.[11]

While during the initial stages of the war in Paris, nightlife continued to offer entertainment, the German occupation forced most of the population to leave the city. After the armistice and the creation of the unoccupied zone German authorities and the new Vichy government were persuaded by the need to restart cultural life, especially in Paris. During the summer of 1940 movie theatres and the Paris Opera reopened, like most cabarets and nightclubs, and the areas of Pigalle-Montmartre, Montparnasse and the Champs-Élysées continued to be the centre of entertainment. However, this was subject to restrictions and shortages that the German occupation had brought. Many actors, singers and musicians were back on stage but those of Jewish origin, and their performances were monitored by authorities.[12] Performing arts were subject to a strict control. As Alan Riding has written, the Germans decided how nightlife should be. Since places for entertainment were closely monitored, Paris by night did not pose a security threat, but Parisians also wanted nightlife to continue, because it provided a sense of normality and gave jobs to those people working in the entertainment circuit.[13]

Several musicians who did not leave France were taken prisoners. For instance, the trumpeter Arthur Briggs was interned in a concentration camp as foreigner. He had arrived in Europe with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra, and in the 1920s worked in London and in other cities in Europe. In 1931 he settled in Paris and became an active figure in the Parisian music scene. After the occupation of Paris, he was arrested and interned in a camp for political prisoners

[10] Lloyd, *Eugene Bullard*, 114–19.
[11] *L'artiste musicien de Paris*, XXIV, n. 258 (4 Trimestre 1939): 4-5
[12] See Chapters 2, 3 and 5 of the volume Alan Riding, *And the Show Went On. Cultural Life in Nazi-Occuped Paris*, 2nd ed. (London: Duckworth Overlook, 2011), 28–72; 90–107; Hervé Le Boterf, *La vie parisienne sous l'Occupation: 1940-1944*, vol. 1 (Paris: Éditions France-Empire, 1974); Julian Jackson, *France: The Dark Years, 1940-1944* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2001), 300–326; Frederic Spotts, *The Shameful Peace: How French Artists & Intellectuals Survived the Nazi Occupation* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2008); Gérard Régnier, *Jazz et société sous l'Occupation* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2009).
[13] Riding, *And the Show Went On. Cultural Life in Nazi-Occuped Paris*, 107.

outside Paris in October 1940. Beside Briggs, there were other African American musicians in the camp. The pianist Tom Waltham was interned in a the "Camp des Internés Britanniques," located in Saint-Denis to the north of Paris, and when he heard of Briggs's internment he asked that the trumpeter be transferred to the British camp. German authorities agreed to the demand and Briggs was sent to the Saint-Denis camp, where he took part in the musical activities in the camp, playing classical music because jazz was forbidden by the Germans. Eventually in August 1944 German authorities abandoned the camp and Briggs escaped together with other prisoners.[14]

Also the Martiniquan Samuel Castendet was held prisoner by the Germans, but he managed to escape and start working in Parisian cabarets again. After the end of the hostilities, he was part of several orchestras playing in various clubs in the city, and he became the manager of the club La Canne à Sucre in Montparnasse, where many Caribbean musicians coming from French territories performed in the post-war years.[15]

The musicians who remained in the country during the war went through hard times, as Leslie Thompson recalled with regard to wartime London:

> Those musicians who didn't get into uniform had the war to face – ration books, blackout, the loss of loved ones, and the raids – so many raids that the anti-aircraft regiments needed anyone they could get.[16]

Leslie Thompson was among those musicians who were called up to the army. During the Second World War, Asian and black British subjects were recruited to work in British factories, and for military service. People from the Caribbean were recruited in substantial number to work in factories in Britain and for military service, especially in the RAF.[17]

In 1942 Leslie Thompson was playing with Edmundo Ros' band, and recalled that because he was a member of the Musicians' Union authorities managed to reach him. Thompson tried

[14] Horst P. J. Bergmeier and Rainer E. Lotz, 'James Arthur Briggs', *Black Music Research Journal* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 93–181.
[15] AN 920486/6 "La Canne à Sucre" cat.5 n.2953 Castendet Samuel; Bagoé, 'Castendet Samuel (Sam)'.
[16] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 111.
[17] Ian Spencer has reconstructed that more than 13.000 men from the Caribbean were recruited for military service. Ian R. G. Spencer, *British Immigration Policy Since 1939. The Making of Multi-Racial Britain* (London and New York: Routledge, 1997), 17.

to avoid the service on appeal before the tribunal, helped by the manageress of the club where the band played - the Coconut Grove in Piccadilly – who said his role as bass player in the band was crucial. However, the tribunal rejected the request and Thompson joined the army. He joined the regiment's band as a trumpet player, and noticed that many people in the camp knew him for his role in Ros' band.[18]

There was only one other coloured soldier in the regiment but Thompson had no contacts with him or with any coloured Americans, and he recalled that there were few colour problems. On one occasion, his musical talent was used by one of his superiors against the discriminatory treatment he had suffered. One day a brigadier who had to take pictures of the soldiers, said that he did not want Thompson in the picture because of his colour. That evening during a dance, Thompson's officer brought the man to the front of the bandstand and made him stand in front of Thompson in order to hear how the person that he did not want to have in the picture could play the trumpet, thus placing emphasis on his skills as a musician.[19]

Other musicians active in the London dance music scene served in the RAF such as the British Guyanese Freddy Grant, the Jamaican Louis Stephenson, and the English drummer with American origins, Alfie Craig.[20] The English trombonist Geoff Love also served in the army. In February 1940 he was conscripted, and joined the army band, because the former members had been taken prisoners. Love recalled that in the band there were some good players, and from instrumentalists he learned orchestration. Being in the band meant that they were non-combat personnel; they entertained the troops and every three months they went to London for a week to do shows and record music for the army.[21]

At the beginning of 1941 two articles published in the *Melody Maker* concerned the impact conscription had on the music scene. The first article, published on 25th January, referred to a meeting of Dance Band Directors' Section of the Musicians' Union to discuss a resolution to be sent to the Ministry of Labour for the exemption from military service for all musicians over the age of 28. Even if there were multiple opinions about the proposal, both in favour of such a measure (but with different criteria), and in opposition to it, all leaders agreed that the increasing intake of men into the armed forces was leading to what the article labelled "the rapid depletion of talent in the musical profession." The main issue was that the Minister of Labour and other

[18] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 109–12.
[19] Thompson and Green, 114–18.
[20] Chilton, *Who's Who of British Jazz*, 89; 155; 340–41; 343.
[21] Love, interview.

officials placed emphasis on the importance of entertainment as a means of keeping up the morale of servicemen and civilians.[22]

The second article published in the following issue on 1st February 1941 devoted attention to the meeting of the Dance Band Directors' Section in which the secretary of the organisation clarified that the proposal of an exemption of musicians from the age of 28 was not to be considered because a similar proposal had already been rejected by the Ministry of Labour a few months earlier. The secretary denounced how already approximately 80% of available dance musicians were already in or registered for service, and there would still be a few hundred musicians who were to be called-up. The enlistment of these remaining musicians had the potential to affect "the whole entertainment industry and the relaxation of millions of people," as dance music was a key-factor in the whole entertainment business.[23]

Members of the BBC were concerned with the issue of the conscription of musicians, too. On 20th March 1941 the producer Philip Brown wrote a memorandum in which he affirmed that the future of dance music programmes was uncertain because, due to the enlistment of musicians, only a few dance bands managed to remain active. In addition, the quality of the performances during wartime had deteriorated in comparison with the standard during peacetime, and it was reasonable to expect that it would continue to worsen. Therefore, Brown suggested the creation of a junior dance band formed of twelve 16 year-old instrumentalists, who would rehearse with the help of arrangers until they reached an adequate standard of playing for broadcasting.[24] Douglas Lawrence, who oversaw dance bands for Variety Programme at BBC London branch, reported Brown's proposal in a memorandum dated 27th March 1941 and addressed to the Assistant Director of the BBC Variety Department. Lawrence referred to the situation as a "racket" of dance band musicians in the services. He criticised the fact that most musicians who served in the RAF and the army were recruited to play in military bands and obtained leave for broadcast dates. Unlike the BBC, the RAF and the army had been able to reserve musicians "by putting them into uniform."[25]

The Martiniquan Ernest Léardée joined the army in the latter stages part of the war. Léardée was in Lille in 1940 when the city was occupied by the Germans. He returned to Paris but soon decided to leave the city and to stay in a small village of the countryside in the region of Yonne,

[22] "Exemption over 28? Leaders To Ask For Action By Ministry of Labour As Call-Ups Decimate Profession," *Melody Maker* XVII, n. 392 (25 January 1941): 1
[23] "Leaders Debate Call-up of Musicians," *Melody Maker* XVII, n. 393 (1 February 1941): 1
[24] BBC WAC/R27/73/1
[25] BBC WAC/R27/73/1

where he resided during the war years. Léardée restarted as hairdresser - his first job - and opened a music school, too. With the German occupation, the situation worsened, Léardée recalled, but he managed to establish a good relationships with the German officers thanks to the German visa on his passport that he had obtained a few years before. This was crucial for his hidden employment as postman for the French Resistance. Eventually after the D-Day landing in Normandy, he joined the French Army.[26]

Many writers felt the arrival of American soldiers on the British and French soils had a significant impact, especially on racial issues. For instance, Stanley Jackson in his *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho* (1946), described how during the conflict, some incidents between coloured men and American soldiers occurred in Soho:

> During the war Soho was the scene of some nasty clashes between local coloured men and American soldiers. It is fair to say that the latter, not always appreciating our lack of colour prejudice, were frequently provocative. Negroes who have lived in this country for years turn "mean" when they hear cracks about "goddam niggers."

It is worth noting that the journalist underlined how the "lack of colour prejudice" in Britain was unsettling for American soldiers. Jackson referred to an episode that occurred at the Colonial Club in Gerrard Street, "a race clash that made one think of Georgia." The fight started in Shaftesbury Avenue, where two American sailors were stabbed by some coloured men who subsequently found refuge in the Colonial Club. The police had to intervene to stop the Americans from entering the club and lynching them. Jackson thought these clashes usually happened because of misconduct on the part of drunk white people:

> Based on experience of negro life in London, Paris and Marseilles, it is usually a degenerate white man or woman, aggressively drunk, who starts the brawling. I know there are plenty of "mean" negroes who like nothing better than a rough-house; […] but I think my view would be supported by the police.[27]

[26] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 200–211.
[27] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 110.

The language used by Jackson reveals how social order could be considered more important than racial issues. Indeed, the journalist used the word "degenerate," an adjective that was often used in descriptions about blacks, and to describe white men or women who were drunk and caused trouble with their attitude against black people.

Jackson wrote about an episode he witnessed in a coloured club run by a black man. Everyone was having a good time, a Jamaica RAF serviceman was playing the piano, a black girl was singing and a black dancer was tap-dancing. The amusing time was halted by the attitude of a white man, who was drunk and harassed people in the club. When the proprietor asked him to stop nicely, he reacted shouting:

> "Don't talk to me, you big black b—!" said the drunk. He repeated the insult several times. The atmosphere was about 99°C but still the coloured man did not lose his temper. Finally, in a strangled voice, he said, "I'm no b—, Mister. My father was just a plain black man. Yours is a lord but he didn't teach you manners." Then he took the drunk by the arm and manoeuvred him out of the place.

It is interesting to note that Jackson added that these kinds of episodes were connected to the social class of people involved, and they occurred in low level clubs, implying a link between the emergence of racial tensions and social level:

> In clubs like 'Frisco's and the Caribbean one can pass a pleasant hour or two without seeing the faintest sign of any racial tension. But once you slide down the social scale the lid is apt to blow off.[28]

[28] Jackson, 110.

The Jamaican bassist Coleridge Goode, too, connected the presence of American soldiers in Britain during the war with the emergence of racist attitudes, especially in clubs where servicemen often created troubles when they saw black soldiers with white girls, and American authorities were in some cases forced to use the criterion of racial segregation to separate white and black soldiers:

> Fights would often broke out when black servicemen tried to dance or talk with English girls in clubs or dance halls. The white GIs would start a brawl when they saw the black servicemen with the girls. I saw all that kind of nastiness. Those poor guys were humiliated so often. It was terrible. Sometimes things were so bad that the American authorities in Britain designated some pubs and clubs as either 'white' or 'black' so that only white GIs were allowed to go to some and only black ones to others. That way authorities tries to prevent the troops from mixing, because it so often led to trouble if they did.

In 1942 Goode was on tour with the band led by the English trumpeter Johnny Caes. Goode and the Trinidadian guitarist Lauderic Caton were the only two black musicians. On several occasions they suffered discriminatory treatment such as the refusal of accommodation in a Bristol hotel probably due to the presence of Americans servicemen, and the segregation on occasion of a band performance at one of the American bases when the two Caribbean musicians were served lunch in a room separate from the other white members of the band.[29]

Having experienced these attitudes first hand, Goode was shocked to such an extent that he felt a strong disdain for the United States:

> All this made me think about these attitudes, all that vileness, which the Americans brought over here and about what it would be like to live in America. I decided I couldn't ever live there. I couldn't have taken all that vicious, racist behaviour.[30]

[29] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 39–40.
[30] Goode and Cotterrell, 40.

Even when, years later, Goode visited New York on his way to Jamaica, he did not change his mind: "I've never wanted to spend any more time there. I saw enough during the war."[31]

Leslie Thompson recalled that the arrival of Americans had an impact because American bands, such as Glenn Miller's, deprived British bands of producing entertainment.[32]

The end of the Second World War was part of broader developments in the music field, whilst on the other it marked changes. From the 1930s onwards Latin styles of music had acquired wider space in the music world. Specific Caribbean genres had tended to be mixed with other styles. It was in the late 1930s and the beginning of the 1940s that the combination of jazz and Afro-Cuban music produced the first tangible results. During the 1940s reciprocal exchanges between jazz musicians and musicians from the Caribbean, created what has come to be known as Latin jazz; the first variant of which to emerge was the Afro-Cuban jazz. In addition to Alberto Socarrás, during this process, the contribution of the clarinettist, saxophonist and trumpeter Mario Bauzá, together with the singer Machito in their band "Machito and his Afro-Cubans" played a fundamental part in influencing American jazz music. The song *Tanga* composed by Bauzá in 1943 is classified as the first composition of Afro-Cuban jazz.[33] Furthermore, contacts between Cuban musicians such as Mario Bauzá and Machito, and bebop musicians such as Dizzie Gillespie and Charlie Parker in the United States were fruitful. Both Parker and Gillespie collaborated with them, and were heavily influenced by Afro-Cuban rhythms. The fusion of elements of the Afro-Cuban tradition with jazz was both a point of arrival of years of exchanges, and a point of departure for the creation of new musical styles.[34] This development was also felt in dance music, and in the 1940s and 1950s this tendency found momentum worldwide. In the music scenes of Paris and London, styles of music such as beguine, calypso, and Afro-Cuban rhythms spread widely. Therefore, musicians from the Caribbean continued to find the two cities attractive places to be and for the opportunity to develop their musical careers.

In Paris after the end of the war, beguine went through a period of modernisation thanks to the contribution of the Panamanian-born saxophonist Robert Mavounzy, who settled in

[31] Goode and Cotterrell, 41.
[32] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 120.
[33] Acosta, 'Interinfluencias y confluencias', 312–13. On Bauzá and Machito see Paul Austerlitz, 'Machito and Mario Bauzá. Latin Jazz in the U.S. Mainstream', in *Jazz Consciousness: Music. Race, and Humanity* (Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2005), 42–97.
[34] See for example John Storm Roberts, *Latin Jazz: The First of the Fusions, 1880s to Today* (New York: Schirmer Books, 1999), and Raul A. Fernandez, *From Afro-Cuban Rhythms to Latin Jazz* (Berkley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 2006).

Guadaloupe at the end of the 1920s, and the Guadeloupian trombonist Albert Lirvat. Lirvat had arrived in Paris for the first time in 1935 to study radio engineering. He went back to Guadeloupe in July 1939 but was forced to return to Paris because of the outbreak of war in May 1941. It was during the German occupation that he became a professional musician, starting with the trombone on the advice of Félix Valvert. During the war and in the post-war years, he played in various clubs such as La Cigale, located close to Place Pigalle, and at La Canne à Sucre where he played with Samuel Castendet's orchestra from 1946 to 1951. In this period he developed the combination between the beguine and bebop.[35]

In London the drummer and bandleader Edmundo Ros managed to spread Latin American music in Britain, with different methods to Lirvat. The latter's fusion of a traditional Caribbean style with bebop was a musical innovation that tended to have a less commercial approach, - in the sense that it was not strictly conceived as music for dancing, - compared to the mix of Latin American genres that Ros performed with his orchestra. Leslie Thompson recalled that the band played a crucial role in the spread of Latin American dance music in London. In late 1939 Thompson had joined the band as bass player, and they were very successful because Ros was able to find the right time to introduce new styles of music and dance:

> We worked at the Mayfair Hotel, as a cabaret show, for there was a need for entertainment, with the threat of war, invasion, death and so on. We did live broadcast, and Ros introduced the dance steps – samba, mambo, and so on – to the audience and taught them to dance to the music we supplied. Some people are not backward at trying anything and it soon caught on. I was really surprised.[36]

In addition, the initial success of the band and the spread of Latin styles was also linked to the outfits musicians wore during shows. Robert Butcher joined Ros' band as lead saxophone in 1946, thanks to an advertisement in the *Melody Maker* which announced that Ros wanted to enlarge the band that performed at the Bagatelle restaurant in Mayfair. Butcher recalled that the musicians wore Cuban-style costumes and Ros directed them while playing the drums. It was

[35] Aude-Anderson Bagoé, 'Lirvat Albert (Al)', in *Encyclopédie de La Musique Traditionnelle Aux Antilles-Guyane: Musiciennes et Musiciens Ayant Évolué En France Métropolitaine* (Case-Pilote: Éditions Lafontaine, 2005).
[36] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 105.

only in the early 1950s that he changed his dress style by wearing a more formal suit and directing the band while playing timbales, after he had accepted the offer to become host in the restaurant.[37]

The engagement at the Coconut Grove club in Piccadilly and the high number of broadcasts that the band did, thanks to the support of one of the BBC studio managers Cecil Madden who had lived in South America and liked Ros' music, contributed to the success of the band.[38] Butcher recalled that especially after the war, the broadcasts came "thick and fast." While the band did daytime broadcasts from studios scattered around London, most broadcasts done at night were recorded during live performances in hotels, restaurants and clubs; the so-called "outside broadcasts." In the case of Ros' band they were recorded during the shows at the Criterion Theatre in Piccadilly. Like Thompson, Butcher believed that the BBC broadcasts and the records made for Decca company played a fundamental role in the constant increase of popularity that the band experienced, which also led to engagements in cities throughout the country and abroad.[39] Ros' band is an important case that shows how the spread of musical genres could cross periods that are often identified as watersheds moments. Ros formed the band before the war, which gained popularity, and continued to be successful during the hostilities and after the war, well into the 1950s.

After the end of the war, clubs that had closed during the conflict re-opened, and new establishments appeared, contributing to the re-emergence of the liveliness in the two cities. "The West End is Waking Up!" was the title of an article published in the *Melody Maker* in November 1948. While the hard times of the war had made the chef more important that the bandleader in clubs, the trend had started to change back to the "days of healthy competition between big bands and bandleaders." Signs suggested that this was just the start and the article affirmed it only needed a revival of "pre-war glamour" with a few clubs to launch an elaborate dance band policy for others to follow, thus bettering standards through band rivalry.[40]

On the day Thompson was demobilised in 1946 he went straight to Archer Street where he immediately found job in a Mayfair nightclub, working with a band that played Latin American music.[41] The months that immediately followed the end of the conflict were also difficult for

[37] Bob Butcher, *Around the World with the Latin Beat* (Brighton: Invocations Press, 2013), 2–12.
[38] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 105.
[39] Butcher, *Around the World*, 13; 24.
[40] "The West End is Waking Up!," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 797 (13 November 1948): 4.
[41] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 122.

musicians, especially because, as Ernest Léardée recalled, many cabarets that had been closed during the war had not yet re-opened, thus there was a scarcity of work. This made him think of returning to his occupation as a hairdresser, which he had started again in the countryside during the war. In Paris he had only obtained small engagements as musician, but when an opportunity to play in a club arose, he accepted, and in less than a year he was a full-time musician again.[42]

Several musicians and club owners who were active in the music scene in the interwar years when black genres of music spread, continued to be active in the post-war years. In some cases managers who had left Europe with the outbreak of the war, returned and re-opened their clubs, but not always with good results. For instance, both Bricktop and Eugene Bullard went back to Paris in 1950, with the intention of re-opening their clubs. Yet, they found the city extremely changed.

When Bricktop arrived in Paris and walked around Montmartre she was surprised to see the area in such a bad condition, it showed no signs of the vibrancy that had characterised it before the war.

> Montmartre looked like a wreck. It hadn't looked all that great by daylight even in the Twenties, but now it wasn't just shabby, it was almost slummy […] The atmosphere wasn't just the same. At night the atmosphere didn't get much better. The places on the Rue Pigalle and Rue Fontaine closed up either at midnight or at one a.m. That was sad. In my day, things were just getting started at that time.[43]

Moreover, she noticed other legacies that the conflict had left, namely resentment towards Americans, which "Yankee go home" signs displaced all over the city demonstrated, alongside the emergence of discriminatory attitudes towards coloured people. People who stayed in Paris during the war told Bricktop that this was linked to the presence of American soldiers:

> The minute the American soldiers came to France, you could just feel the prejudice in the streets. The white American soldier brought it.

[42] Léardée et al., *La Biguine de L'Oncle Ben's*, 213.
[43] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 237–38.

> After the war more and more Americans – average Americans, not the quality of Cole [*Porter* (a/n)] and his crowd – started coming, and they made it even worse. […] It made me sad to see all that happening in Paris, the city that I loved so much, but I wasn't going to let it keep me from opening up Bricktop's again.

The attempts at re-opening clubs led to negative outcomes both for Bullard and Bricktop, as they experienced many difficulties. Bullard encountered economic difficulties for relocation, and abandoned his idea of restarting his career as a manager in Paris. He left Europe and returned to the United States.[44] Despite some troubles at the beginning, Bricktop managed to re-open her club. First she encountered difficulties in obtaining a license because of the restrictions of controls from the administration and the police. Then, once she found a location for the club, she had trouble with the union for the employment of foreign musicians and for joining it in order to entertain as well as manage the club. The club re-opened in May 1950 but lasted only one year. As Bricktop recalled, they were "trying to re-create the old Paris days" but the nights when the place was full of people were not enough to keep the club alive. Consequently, Bricktop left Paris and opened a club in Rome.[45]

Some of the key figures of the interwar years continued to play a role in the post-war years. For instance in 1948, the journal *Checkers: A Monthly Journal in Black and White* in 1948 dedicated an article to "Happy" Blake. Significantly, the journal's subtitle said "Britain's First Negro Magazine," which clearly expressed the magazine's orientation. "Happy" Blake, "one of the foremost exponents of this new music in the pioneering days," was included among black jazz musicians who were "struggling to make the Old World acquainted with this exciting new rhythm."[46] George "Happy" Blake had served the Merchant Navy from 1918 until 1920. With his brother Cyril, he arrived in England with the Southern Syncopated Orchestra and they decided to stay. In the 1920s and 1930s, Blake was active in the music scenes of several cities, including Paris.[47] Not only was he active as a drummer and bandleader, but he also ran various clubs in London, such as the Shim Sham, and played an intermediary role as bandleader when

[44] Lloyd, *Eugene Bullard*, 139.
[45] Bricktop, *Bricktop*, 240–46.
[46] "'Happy' Blake. Bandleader and Club Owner," *Checkers: A Monthly Journal in Black and White* I, n. 3 (November 1948): 9.
[47] Howard Rye, 'Southern Syncopated Orchestra: The Roster', *Black Music Research Journal* 30, no. 1 (Spring 2010): 21.

in the mid 1930s he began to recruit musicians from the Caribbean. His band, formed of a rotating cast of musicians, performed at the black club Jig's, playing a variety of genres, alternating Venezuelan *paseos*, Trinidadian calypso, and Jamaican mento with jazz tunes. When they played at more upscale clubs such as the Havana Club and Cuba Club, where the band was resident, the repertoire included more Latin genres.[48]

The article underlined how the experience acquired in the interwar years was important for his career in the 1940s and 1950s. In 1948 Blake owned a club in the East End of London and it was a meeting point for coloured artists, musicians, students and seamen:

> From the glitter and glamour of Paris and Piccadilly to the East End is a rather odd jump, but "Happy" seems to have settled down to his friends in the East with the same adaptability and ease which made him a successful showman for many years. He feels as comfortable in a lounge suit in Aldgate as he did in white tie and tails in the West End. He is as much a landmark in East End life as Eros is in Piccadilly, because his club represents good clean fun for everybody irrespective of race or colour.[49]

New trends of migration had an important influence in the years that followed the end of the war, too. In Britain, the first wave of mass migration from the Caribbean had significance for British society in the post-war period, including the spread of new Caribbean music. The arrival of a young generation of Caribbean musicians and the intuition of producers such as Denis Preston led to the recording of Caribbean music for export and local consumption.[50] The bassist Coleridge Goode affirmed that before the war, the main influence came from the United States. It was the arrival of Caribbean immigrants at the end of the 1940s that influenced Caribbean genres such as calypso to become a force.[51]

[48] Matera, *Black London*, 161–62.
[49] "'Happy' Blake. Bandleader and Club Owner," *Checkers: A Monthly Journal in Black and White* I, n. 3 (November 1948): 9.
[50] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 72.
[51] Goode, interview.

In June 1948 the *Empire Windrush*, the ship that left Jamaica carrying the first large group of Caribbean immigrants to Britain, docked in the port of Tilbury, close to London. Among the passengers were Trinidadian musicians who gained popularity as calypsonians in the 1950s: Egbert Moore (Lord Beginner), Harold Philips (Lord Woodbine), and Aldwyn Roberts. Known by the stage name of Lord Kitchener, Roberts obtained a huge success with his incorporation of Latin and bebop elements in the Trinidadian genre of calypso, and became a reference point for the Caribbean community in London.[52] On board the ship Roberts wrote the song "London is the place for me" that he recorded in 1951.

The end of the Second World War brought with it changes in the ways in which both the British and the French states dealt with their colonial territories. The contribution of soldiers from colonial territories, and the need to reaffirm the strength of the two nations after a devastating war, led Britain and France to implement legislative measures aimed at reinforcing the link with their overseas territories. In the aftermath of the conflict, two pieces of legislation in France and Britain directly concerned the Caribbean territories, and had consequences for the movements of people from the islands towards the metropole countries. These movements were at the basis of new musical influences that spread in the two capitals.

The constitution of the French Fourth Republic which entered into force in 1946, proclaimed the creation of the French Union: a single entity that comprehended France and its empire. On 19th March 1946, the French National Assembly approved a law which transformed the status of the French Caribbean colonies of Guadeloupe and Martinique, along with French Guiana and the island of Réunion in the Indian Ocean, into *Départements d'Outre Mer* (DOM). This meant that the population of these territories no longer had the status of French colonial subjects; they became citizens of the French state.[53]

Two years later, in February1948, the British government introduced the British Nationality Act; the first piece of legislation that established a definition of citizenship in the British

[52] Philip Carter, "Roberts, Aldwyn (1922-2000)," *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 2012), http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/73811, accessed 21 September 2015.

[53] "Loi n° 46-451 du 19 mars 1946 tendant au classement comme départements français de la Guadeloupe, de la Martinique, de la Réunion et de la Guyane française," https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000868445&dateTexte=20180528. Elizabeth Buettner, *Europe after Empire: Decolonization, Society, and Culture* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2016), 123–26.

context. This Act was influenced by the Citizenship Act which the Canadian government had introduced in 1946, and which made Canada the first country within the Commonwealth to differentiate between its citizens from all British subjects, and by citizenship laws that India, Pakistan and Ceylon enacted after independence in 1947. The British Nationality Act introduced six categories of citizenship, among which were Citizenship of UK and the Colonies (CUKC), and the Citizenship of Independent Commonwealth Countries (CICC), which defined two categories of British subjects with identical rights.[54] The Act established for the first time a definition of citizenship that gave equal rights to British citizens in the United Kingdom and the colonies, including the right to move within the Empire without substantial restrictions.

Similar socioeconomic contexts on the Caribbean islands had made labour migration an economic survival strategy, because of the crisis of the sugar industry and the economic crisis of the 1930s, which were the underlying reasons of the high levels of unemployment. Before the war, movements of people mainly involved seasonal migration within the Caribbean and towards the United States.[55] In the post-war years the citizenship status of people in the Caribbean territories of both Britain and France came to enjoy, gave them the right to enter the metropolitan nations, settle and work there. Therefore, Britain and France became primary destinations for migrants. However, as Margaret Byron and Stéphanie Condon have written, policies on immigration from the Caribbean colonies differ in the two countries because nationality and citizenship legislation was determined by British and French policies on their colonial empires, on post-war needs, and on dissimilar ideologies on citizenship and the nation.[56]

The experience of working in factories or fighting in the army during the war was fundamental for the choice to settle in Britain after the end of the conflict that many Caribbean men made. Indeed, the two ships that left Jamaica in late 1947 and in June 1948, the SS *Almanzora* and the SS *Empire Windrush* respectively, transported a high number of ex-servicemen and volunteers who wanted to return to Britain due to unemployment and problems

[54] British Nationality Act (1948), http://www.legislation.gov.uk/ukpga/Geo6/11-12/56/contents. Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 53; Randall Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration in Post-War Britain* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2000), 37–49.
[55] Cowley, 'West Indies Blues', 188–89.
[56] Margaret Byron and Stéphanie Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective: Caribbean Communities in Britain and France* (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2008), 25. Other comparative works on Caribbean migration to Britain and France include: Gary P. Freeman, 'Caribbean Migration to Britain and France: From Assimilation to Selection', in *The Caribbean Exodus* (New York: Praeger, 1987); Adrian Favell, *Philosophies of Integration: Immigration and the Idea of Citizenship in France and Britain* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 1998).

of resettlement that affected them in their homelands. This was the pioneer group of a new flow of Caribbean immigrants that developed through networks and contacts in the following years, as spouses and relatives of ex-servicemen followed them. Thus, the experience of the war, along with the awareness of their right to settle and work in Britain as British citizens, obtained through the British Nationality Act, and the introduction of the McCarran-Walter Immigration and Nationality Act in 1952 which restricted migrant quotas for entry into the United States,[57] Britain became the principal destination for British Caribbean migrants.[58]

This new wave of migration resulted in a change in the topography of London, because these immigrants settled in specific areas. In the 1930s and 1940s, Camden and the surrounding areas of north and central London became the main destination for African and Caribbean settlers. Several black musicians lived in Camden, Bloomsbury and around Tottenham Court Road, which constituted what Marc Matera has defined the "Soho-Camden axis."[59] Immigrants who arrived in London in the late 1940s settled in Brixton, in south London, and in Notting Hill in the western part of the city, which became the main areas of settlement for people arriving from the Caribbean, especially from Jamaica and Trinidad. In the case of Notting Hill, the movement of people combined with changes occurring in the area. Wealthy people had abandoned the district and middle-class people replaced them because they were attracted by the Victorian housing, the proximity of the area to the West End, and Portobello Road market. At the same time, prostitution spread in Notting Hill, which, combined with what Jerry White has described "do-as-you-please local traditions among shifting population," and the area became a new pleasure district.[60]

After the war labour shortages resulted in an active search for foreign labour on the part of British authorities, especially from Ireland and European countries such as Italy and Poland. In this context, the possibility of employing surplus labour from the Caribbean territories emerged in the public debate both in Britain and in the colonies with governors of Barbados, Trinidad, British Guiana and Jamaica suggesting that their migrant population could fill the need.

[57] Immigration and Nationality Act (27 June 1952), Public Law 414, http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/STATUTE-66/pdf/STATUTE-66-Pg163.pdf
[58] Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 17–18; Byron and Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 30–35; Kennetta Hammond Perry, *London Is the Place for Me: Black Britons, Citizenship and the Politics of Race* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 54–59. Specific studies on the post-war Caribbean migration to the United Kingdom include: Ceri Peach, *West Indian Migration to Britain* (London: Oxford University Press for the Institute of Race Relations, 1968); Margaret Byron, *Post-War Caribbean Migration to Britain: The Unfinished Cycle* (Aldershot: Avebury, 1994).
[59] Matera, *Black London*, 13.
[60] White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 339.

However, debate within the British government focused on the lack of skills of Caribbean immigrants and resulted in the preference to avoid recruiting colonial labour when white labour was available. The government did not expect the arrival of such an amount of people from the Caribbean. As it could not stop the flux, it tried not to encourage further arrivals though pressure on colonial governments for administration of passport issuance. Yet, Caribbean governments were reluctant in this sense, especially in the case of Jamaica, which was facing high unemployment, and migration could alleviate difficulties. British authorities also used informal methods to discourage immigration, including films warning about the worst aspects of life in Britain, or notices warning about difficulties in finding accommodation and jobs.[61]

The integration of immigrants who arrived in the post-war years brought various problems in the urban space, including a concentration of immigrants in inner-city housing, the prejudice that employers had towards black workers, and episodes of civil unrest.[62] Leslie Thompson recalled that the arrival of people from the Caribbean was at the basis of the emergence of discriminatory attitudes towards black people. He noticed that whilst prior to this migration white people did not have contact with blacks and the prejudice was marginal, in the 1950s the new flux of immigration changed the situation:

> When boatloads of black people came the media started it, all that nonsense about 'polluting the race'. The migrants were a neglected lot. I hadn't been treated badly in England, and in the 1950s I was distant from the newcomers, or from their fate, because I had a job, I had a settled way of life. But when I stepped out of my area it changed. So I was made aware, from that, and from the West Indian fellowship meetings, that these poor fellows and girls from Jamaica, and elsewhere in the West Indies, were having a rough time. They were exploited by black and white.[63]

It is interesting to note that Thompson underlined the distance between him as member of an "old generation" of migrants, who had settled in England before the war, and the newcomers, who were experiencing a difficult time. However, the distance shortened when he drew closer

[61] Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 32–46; Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 56–57.
[62] Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 58.
[63] Thompson and Green, *Swing from a Small Island*, 129.

to them and realised that their difficulties were caused by exploitation by both blacks and whites.

Local authorities observed that the new flux of immigrants brought changes, as a memorandum written on 21st January 1952 by the Town Clerk of Kensington, the area in the west part of London which includes Notting Hill, shows. The Town Clerk affirmed that London, as capital of an empire, had been accustomed to a polyglot population, therefore it was inherent in the character of British people to accept people from overseas "irrespective of race, creed or colour." Whereas before the Second World War the presence of foreign or coloured communities did not cause particular problems, in the post-war years, a number of London boroughs were concerned with the considerable increase in their coloured population. This growth changed the situation, leading Londoners to look with increasing disfavour on the immigration of coloured people accustomed to lower standards of living in their own countries compared to the standards reached in Britain. Among the main issues the Town Clerk outlined were: housing problems such as overcrowding, linked to both lower living standards in the colonies; difficulty in finding accommodation; public health problems arising not only from overcrowding but also from poverty and low living standards; unemployment; moral problems with considerable numbers of coloured men living with convicted prostitutes and a very low standard of honesty and ethical conduct of certain sections of immigrants; public order problems such as fights between coloured immigrants as the result of quarrels over white women and racial disputes leading to fighting.

Therefore, due to "the current abnormal conditions," the Town Clerk affirmed that a limitation of immigrants should be considered. However, he specified that even if he appreciated the prohibition of settling immigrants in countries such as Australia and Canada, in the case of British subjects entering the United Kingdom this solution was "neither feasible nor desirable." Instead, he referred to the example of Cyprus where local authorities adopted the practice of enquiring whether proposed accommodation in which a potential immigrant willing to leave the island proposed to occupy was suitable, and if an unfavourable report was submitted, an exit visa could be refused. As many London boroughs reported, the practice was working well, thus the Town Clerk suggested its extension to other colonies, and the enlargement of the enquiry to cover the prospect of employment. In addition, he underlined that better arrangements for the welfare of the coloured population were needed, and he proposed the creation of an interdepartmental organisation including representatives of London boroughs to act as an intermediate body between coloured people and local or governmental authorities.

The conclusion of the memorandum highlighted the fact that not all coloured immigrants created problems. On the contrary, the majority were "good and law-abiding citizens;" it was the minority of coloured immigrants that created greater difficulties "because of their differences of race, environment, and habits."[64]

As a local authority, the Town Clerk required steps be taken to deal with these problems before they became acute. However, as his suggestions show, a restrictive intervention at a governmental level was not viewed favourably. During the interwar years Britain had adopted a policy aimed at limiting the growth of the number of coloured seamen through administrative measures such as government circulars, intergovernmental arrangements and confidential letters from the Home Office to the police. In the 1950s the new flow of migration caused concern and stimulated debate among policy makers regarding the potential to introduce migration controls. However, they did not result in the introduction of legislative measures on immigration and the issue was dealt with through administrative methods, which were deemed to be effective.[65] Attachment to the Commonwealth was strong and influenced politicians' views. The introduction of migration controls would have implied a change in the relationship with the Old Commonwealth, comprising Canada, New Zealand, and Australia. Conservative governments in the 1950s were reluctant to introduce immigration restrictions solely to New Commonwealth migrants from the Caribbean and the sub-continent because it was considered racially discriminatory and, at the same time, they did not want to extend restrictions to Old Commonwealth migrants.[66] Debates and pressure for restrictions notwithstanding, only in 1962 was legislation on Commonwealth immigration adopted. The government introduced the Commonwealth Immigrants Act which distinguished between British subjects' right to enter the United Kingdom by restricting it to Commonwealth citizens who were born in Great Britain or held a government-issued passport.[67]

The Colonial Office, played a role in the decision not to introduce legislation dealing with Commonwealth immigration, and defended the right to enter the United Kingdom for British subjects from the Caribbean because the Caribbean territories were still colonies. This attitude was also linked to ideas about Caribbean people as industrious and reliable, whereas Indian and

[64] TNA MEPO 2/9047/6B
[65] Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 53; Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 37–49.
[66] Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 49–128; Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 62–80.
[67] Commonwealth Immigrants Act (1962), https://web.archive.org/web/20110927012831/http://www.britishcitizen.info/CIA1962.pdf.

Pakistani immigration was seen less favourably.[68] This differentiation also applied to West African immigration, as archival documents show.

On 22nd June 1951 the Town Clerk of the Borough of Lambeth in south London wrote a letter to the Secretary of State for the Colonies in which he reported the growth of coloured population in the borough, especially in Brixton. Indeed, Brixton was one of the areas in which new migrants from the Caribbean and West Africa settled. A petition submitted to the Council of the borough by some residents had drawn attention to the very bad conditions in which a large number of coloured people lived. The Town Clerk underlined how many of the new immigrants were British subjects who entered into the country without any prospect of employment and, in a number of cases, they seemed to rely on the support obtained from Public Assistance authorities. In addition, they lived in overcrowded premises and in poor conditions. As similar circumstances were arising in other parts of London, the Council decided to communicate with the Colonial Office to consider what steps could be taken to regulate the flow of coloured people to London.[69]

A few weeks later the National Assistance Board Area Office produced a report which dealt with the assistance given to coloured immigrants. The report showed that the rise in number of coloured applicants requesting National Assistance during the preceding months regarded Jamaican men and women who had a job, and in general, houses where only Jamaicans lived were usually well run. West Africans, by contrast, had a deplorable standard of living, and fights were frequent in the premises where coloured immigrants lived with white girls, who in several cases were prostitutes. The report emphasised the main difficulty was that West Africans were unskilled and "naturally lazy," therefore they were offered the lower paid jobs. In addition, a great number of coloured men worked in nightclubs and dance halls of the West End, among whom were those who played in dance bands. This situation was bringing about growing resentment against the black population in the borough. The report concluded that action from the Colonial Office could solve the problems that were caused by a minority of "degraded and idle West Africans" which was "giving the whole community a bad name."[70]

In the following months the police dealt with the issue of population growth in the borough. A report dated 4th August 1951 and addressed to the Chief Superintendent of the division that included Brixton, identified the streets and the number of houses where approximately 300

[68] Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 85.
[69] TNA MEPO 2/9047/1E
[70] TNA MEPO 2/9047/1G

West African and Jamaican men and women lived. The Chief inspector noticed the observations made by the Town Clerk about the presence of these people were correct, but he underlined that there was quite a good number of coloured men who led respectable lives. However, there were a considerable number of houses where coloured men lived with white girls, who worked as prostitutes in the West End. The men with whom they lived were described as men "of the insolent type, slothful and lazy," who lounged about the streets during the day, lived in poorly furnished and overcrowded houses, and, with few exceptions, had no occupation. Some of the premises were subject to constant police enquiry concerning gaming, immoral living, and quarrelsome and disorderly conduct. Indeed, the document reported the number and kind of offences that occurred between January 1950 and August 1951, and which led to police proceedings which in all cases involved West Africans. The improper behaviour brought about growing resentment against the coloured population in the district, therefore the inspector suggested that the problem would solve itself if these people were given accommodation with proper supervision in suitable hostels and occupation. Three days later the Chief Superintendent of the division shared this view in a note in the margin of the document. Since some of the newcomers to the Brixton area were "quickly initiated into a mode of lazy and vicious living," and the "bad types" were irreclaimable, the Superintendent suggested that it could be possible to prevent newcomers from coming under any bad influence through their placement in hostels or even training camps on their entry to the country, "where they could receive elementary education in the English way of life and be tested for their capabilities for employment."[71]

The report made on 27th March 1952 by the Chief Superintendent of the police division police that included Kensington in its jurisdiction, expressed an even more negative view on the possibility of integration of the coloured population. The Superintendent affirmed that while foreign white immigrants were gradually absorbed into the life of Britain, there seemed to be no similar prospect in the case of the "coloured races." For this reason, it was essential that some steps were taken before the problem assumed serious proportions. The view was determined by bias, especially relating to moral issues. In the same document, the Superintendent differentiated between the coloured population of Earls Court district which consisted of "the better educated type," mainly colonial students who maintained a reasonable standard of living and conduct, and the coloured men living in Notting Hill. In the latter case, they were described as "indolent," and people living by dishonest methods, preferring "to take

[71] TNA MEPO 2/9047/2A

the easy road and gravitate towards public assistance and crime rather than face hard regular work." The variations in the standard of education and intelligence of the coloured population notwithstanding, the Superintendent affirmed that coloured men had "a tendency to form associations with white women of the lower classes to whom the coloured man appears to have an irresistable sex attraction."[72]

In general, the observations of police officers and their superiors tended to underline the difference between Jamaican and West African immigrants, with the latter regarded as lazy, with a low ethical conduct, in some cases living with convicted white prostitutes, smoking Indian Hemp, and being embroiled in illegal activities such as gambling. Another report made by the Brixton police station on 1st April 1952, noticed that in the area the coloured population, mainly composed of Jamaicans and West Africans, did not cause trouble to the police. Most of them were employed in industry and led normal lives. The Jamaicans were mostly skilled technicians and of higher social order than the West Africans, who were described as "persons of low mentality, immature and irresponsible ways." The inspector explained that it was the behaviour of a minority of West Africans that gave rise to a certain amount of prejudice on the part of the small section of the white population. Some employers were reluctant to engage coloured personnel and many employees were reluctant to work beside men of colour. Even if a small section of the community had tried to stir up racial prejudice with slogans such as "Keep Britain White" written on roadways, and articles in the local press, these writings did not reflect the feelings of the majority of the white population. In conclusion, the inspector underlined that the arrival of coloured women had resulted in a general improvement in the behaviour of men, and neither coloured women nor the children of mixed unions had presented any problems to the police. At the end of the document the Chief Inspector in a note dated 2nd April 1952 directed to his superior, stated that the coloured population did not constitute a police problem, it was rather a social problem. Indeed, while the minority of coloured men who lived a life of ease were sufficiently learned in the law to avoid prosecution, most coloured people led quiet lives.[73]

Although determined by similar socioeconomic contexts in the colonies and labour needs in the metropole, Caribbean migration towards France developed in a different way to Britain. The 1946 law which transformed the colonial islands of Guadeloupe and Martinique to DOM gave Caribbean population the status of French citizens. The French government dealt with the issue of labour shortage through a policy that proclaimed France as a country welcoming

[72] TNA MEPO 2/9047/10A
[73] TNA MEPO 2/9047/12M

immigrants with no selection based on origin, and accepted the migration of new citizens from the Caribbean islands. The policy developed to attract foreign labour was based on the Ordinance of 2nd November 1945 enacted by the provisional government headed by General de Gaulle. It established state control of the overall level of recruitment of foreign migrants according to economic and demographic needs without ethnic preference.[74] A bespoke state-run agency, the Office National d'Immigration, was responsible for the whole immigration process. This scheme tended to replicate the system of foreign labour recruitment that the French state had adopted at the beginning of the twentieth century when agreements with European countries including Italy, Belgium, and Poland, provided for the arrival of migrant workers to offset labour shortages in the expanding industrial sector.[75] Even if the ordinance did not envisage any ethnic criteria, French authorities tended to view European rather than African or Asian immigration more favourably. The aim that underpinned the law was to encourage the settlement of immigrants from European countries. However, migrant inflows from European countries were low, and French employers were reluctant to comply with the procedures of the Ordinance that require them to request an advance authorisation for the entry of an immigrant worker.[76] Thus, the admission of colonial citizens was considered a good solution for reducing labour shortages.

In line with the assimilation policy of the French government that considered all French citizens part of the nation, migration from the newly created DOM was accepted as a new workforce. Organised migration from Guadeloupe and Martinique could reduce labour shortages in France and at the same time reduce overpopulation and unemployment on the Caribbean islands, consequently lowering the risk of political uprising in the context of colonial struggles for independence.[77] Once arrived in France, Caribbean immigrants tended to fill the sectors of unqualified labour in the public services that foreign migrants could not enter. Recruitment into the public sector resulted in a concentration of migrants in major cities, especially in Paris and its suburbs.[78]

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[74] Weil, *La France et ses étrangers*, 61–62.
[75] Alec G. Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France. Immigration, Politics, Culture and Society.*, 2nd ed. (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2007), 16–19; Byron and Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 42–43.
[76] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 165–67.
[77] Byron and Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 32; 38–39. On migration from the French Caribbean islands see Alain Anselin, *L'émigration antillaise en France: la troisième île* (Paris: Karthala, 1990); Michel Giraud et al., 'La Guadeloupe et La Martinique Dans l'histoire Française Des Migrations En Régions de 1848 à Nos Jours', *Hommes & Migrations* 2, no. 1279 (2009): 174–97.
[78] Byron and Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 58–59.

In the French debate, Caribbean migration was separate from foreign immigration.[79] In the case of movement from French territories, migration from North Africa, especially from Algeria, received greater attention. On 20th September 1947 a law approved by the French National Assembly gave Algerians the status of French citizens, thus the right to live and work in metropolitan France.[80] As a result, a growing number of Algerians moved to France and settled there in the post-war years.[81] Even if French immigration laws stipulated that migrant workers should acquire suitable housing before asking for their family to join them, there was little control on entry and an acute housing shortage in urban areas.[82] A lack of intervention characterised French public policy concerning the welfare of immigrants. Even if employers were required to make arrangements for the housing of immigrant workers, in most cases this did not occur. Moreover, foreign migrants did not have facilitated access to public housing, and many immigrant workers faced discrimination in the housing market. Thus, overcrowding problems and poor housing conditions affected the lives of many Caribbean and North African migrants, usually living in single furnished rooms in inner-city slums. So-called *bidonvilles*, poor areas where especially Portuguese and North African migrants were concentrated - expanded on the outskirts of Paris. The public agency Fonds d'Action Sociale, created in 1958, dealt with the issue, investing money in hostel accommodation initially directed solely to Algerian immigrants. However, bad social conditions in which many immigrants lived and the loss of control on the ethnic composition of foreign population would lead French authorities to adopt measures restricting migration at the end of the 1960s.[83]

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[79] This is also reflected in French literature on immigration. Many studies on migration to France do not include Caribbean migrations. See for instance, Marianne Amar and Pierre Milza, *L'immigration En France Au XXe Siècle* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1990); Weil, *La France et ses étrangers*; Natacha Lillo, ed., *Histoire Des Immigrations En Île-de-France de 1830 à Nos Jours* (Paris: Publibook, 2012).

[80] "Loi n. 47-1853 du 20 septembre 1947 portant statut organique de l'Algérie," https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000875131&fastPos=1&fastReqId=2116264574&categorieLien=id&oldAction=rechTexte.

[81] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 21; Lillo, *Histoire Des Immigrations En Île-de-France*, 106. Several works have focused attention on Algerian migration to France including: Benjamin Stora, *Ils venaient d'Algérie: L'immigration algérienne en France (1912-1992)* (Paris: Fayard, 1992); Neil MacMaster, *Colonial Migrants and Racism: Algerians in France, 1900–62* (Basingstoke and London: Macmillan Press, 1997); Paul A. Silverstein, *Algeria in France: Transpolitics, Race, and Nation* (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 2004).

[82] Rosemary Wakeman, *The Heroic City: Paris, 1945-1958* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 2009), 131–45.

[83] Hargreaves, *Multi-Ethnic France*, 166; Byron and Condon, *Migration in Comparative Perspective*, 136–37. On the issue of Algerian migration and the welfare state see for instance: Peggy Derder, *L'immigration algérienne et les pouvoirs publics dans le département de la Seine, 1954-1962* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2001); Amelia H. Lyons, *The Civilizing Mission in the Metropole: Algerian Families and the French Welfare State during Decolonization* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2013). A recent study had devoted attention to African and Caribbean migration to Paris in the post-war years: Félix F. Germain, *Decolonizing the Republic: African and Caribbean Migrants in Postwar Paris, 1946–1974* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2016).

> It was dusk and there was a mingled scent of oranges and garlic in the air. One by one the red, blue, green and golden signs outside the restaurants and cafés flickered into life. Along Old Crompton Street, up Frith Street and Greek Street the theatregoers sought vainly for a space in which to park their cars. There was a noisy traffic block at the junction of Wardour Street and Old Compton Street where the flood from Shaftesbury Avenue battled against the evening ebb from Soho. Dodging between the honking cars, I turned into an Espresso café called Heaven and Hell, that had borrowed its name from a Montmartre cabaret. […] Heaven was on the street level. Hell, appropriately approached by a precipitous flight of stairs, was in the cellar. Significantly, while Heaven was almost deserted, every inch of space in Hell was occupied.[84]

With these words the journalist Arthur Tietjen in 1956 described the atmosphere that he found in Soho on an evening he spent there.

In the post-war years the number of clubs in London increased. The London police elaborated figures on the number of registered clubs which show this phenomenon. In 1945 the number of clubs in London was 1,082,[85] in 1951 it had risen to 1,349,[86] and by 1956 it had reached 1,529.[87]

The increase in numbers notwithstanding, the police did not find it difficult to deal with clubs, the Chief Inspector of Police noted in a report on registered clubs addressed to the Superintendent. The document, dated 26th August 1947, said that in the previous six months "Club-land" had not produced difficulties to the police. The inspector observed that the reasons leading to "a definite slackening off in consumption of liquor" were the continued scarcity of liquor and the "apparent absence of 'loose money' amongst former habitués of West End clubs." This showed how two years after the end of the war the effects of the conflict were still significant. However, the inspector requested that the general authority kept inside observation

[84] Arthur Tietjen, *Soho. London's Vicious Circle* (London: Allan Wingate, 1956), 150.
[85] TNA MEPO 2/7755/1A
[86] TNA MEPO 2/7755/13B
[87] TNA MEPO 2/7755/26A

on a list of more than 70 clubs.[88] This suggests that the police found it likely that there may be irregularities in clubs and therefore they should be monitored.

Among the clubs under surveillance was the Caribbean Club, located in Denman Street in Piccadilly. In 1944 the Jamaican bassist Coleridge Goode started working there, and he remembered the club was run by a Jamaican man called Rudy Evans, actor, singer and former saxophonist in Nigerian pianist Fela Sowande's band at the Old Florida Club.[89] When Goode was asked by the Trinidadian guitarist Lauderic Caton to join him and the German pianist Dick Katz to form the Caribbean Trio, Goode accepted immediately. Goode had already established a relationship with both musicians. When in 1942 he had moved to London, Dick Katz was one of the first musicians who helped him find a job. Katz had arrived in Britain during the war, after leaving first Nazi Germany because of his Jewish origins, and then Holland with the outbreak of the war. One of the first bands Goode began to work with in the capital was led by the English trumpeter Johnny Claes. Goode and Lauderic Caton were the only two black musicians in the band, and they established a close friendship, especially because of their common Caribbean origins.[90] In addition to the good personal relationship between the three musicians, the club itself was important for the success of the band. Indeed, Goode recalled that the Caribbean Club was a wonderful environment, especially because of a very special atmosphere. It was a "genuinely mixed club in terms of race and class," and this fact made it "unusual and successful because most clubs in those days weren't mixed like that." This good atmosphere made it possible for the trio to make interesting music because they felt completely comfortable playing there.[91]

In the early 1950s British authorities dealt with clubs using the system of licenses and inside observation to monitor the entertainment provided by clubs. For instance, a report dated 21st April 1955 described how various actions had been taken against clubs in London including the New Coconut Grove in Regent Street. On 14th November 1954 the police opened a proceeding against the owner Edmundo Ros for the violation of conditions provided by the Special Hours Certificate, which resulted in the payment of a fine in February 1955.[92] The British government had introduced this certificate a few years before, in 1949 with the Licensing Act. The measure allowed hotels, restaurants and clubs, which provided music and dance and were located in

[88] TNA MEPO 3/2642/90A; TNA MEPO 3/2642/90B
[89] Matera, *Black London*, 177.
[90] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 38–39.
[91] Goode and Cotterrell, 45.
[92] TNA MEPO 3/2642

certain parts of London, to remain open beyond permitted hours (until 2 a.m., and 3.a.m. in the West End). This is another example which shows that authorities treated London in a different way from the rest of the country. Only in 1961 did they extend the special hours certificate to the nation as a whole with a new Licensing Act.[93]

In the post-war years, what some observers called the "decadence" of the West End continued to be in the public eye. For instance, at the beginning of the 1950s Piccadilly Circus was at the centre of a campaign against the decay of the area made by the journal *Sunday Graphic*. Articles that appeared in the journal in October 1950 argued that prostitution, pornography, violence and hooliganism were widespread in the streets of Piccadilly at night. The arrival of visitors on the occasion of the Coronation of Queen Elisabeth II the following year made it necessary to clean up an area which was "once symbolic of the grandeur and real spirit of Britain." Through this campaign, the journal managed to draw the discontent of inhabitants and visitors, asking for an increase of the power of magistrates and police in the area. Interestingly, one of the critiques concerned the weaker legislation that punished prostitutes who annoyed people in the streets in London, whereas it was stricter in the provinces. In addition, local municipal authorities were asked to take decisive action against these activities: the Westminster City Council was provocatively urged to "concentrate not on the lights of the metropolis – but on what goes on so blatantly beneath them."[94]

In this case the pressure on authorities came from civil society. The chairman of the British Travel and Holidays Association on 21st October 1952 wrote to an inspector of the London police to ask for help on how to deal with a letter that he had received from the general manager of Thomas Cook & Son, an important company working in the touristic sector which had been nationalised after the war.[95] In the letter dated 6th October 1952 the manager of the company referred to the campaign of the *Sunday Graphic* affirming that the state of affairs described in the articles had provoked criticism from many Americans and was damaging the Britain's reputation. The manager himself had seen at first hand how bad things had become in Piccadilly with prostitutes approaching men in the streets and homosexuals "behaving in the most revolting manner;" something that he had never seen "so blantantly" in London before. This situation was damaging for any effort to promote Britain, above all because people from abroad

[93] Simon Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain, Volume I: 1950-1967*, 2nd ed. (London and New York: Routledge, 2013), 34; Yeomans, *Alcohol and Moral Regulation*, 151–52.
[94] "Clean Up Piccadilly Circus. The Nation Backs Our Campaign," *Sunday Graphic* (12 October 1952), Press Clipping, TNA MEPO 2/9367/1E
[95] TNA MEPO 2/9367/1A.

had the impression that the police tolerated or even condoned the whole issue. Moreover, the manager affirmed that the comparison with other countries reinforced this idea: "there is nothing comparable with it in America, and even in Paris it does not seem to create the revolting impression which it does among visitors to London." Therefore, he urged the chairman of the British Travel and Holidays Association to make pressure on authorities to deal with the problem.[96]

The Chief Superintendent of "C" Division, covering Mayfair and Soho, wrote a report on 30th October 1952 dealing with the matters raised by the campaign of the *Sunday Graphic*. The officer noted that after the war there was an increase in the number of prostitutes, "male perverts" and pornographic literature in the West End. The influx of troops into London had contributed to the increase in prostitution during the war, and the decrease in the number of clients after the end of the conflict forced prostitutes to find customers by soliciting men in the streets. Homosexual prostitution, which the Chief Superintendent labelled "male perversion," had increased, too. He gave a list of places where "male importuners" could be found at day and at night and divided them into two categories: professionals and amateurs from the provinces or suburbs, respectively. The police had taken action against both forms of prostitution, and this was testified by an increase in the number of arrests which had doubled between 1946 and 1952. In addition, the report noticed that in the West End there was a certain amount of hooliganism in many cases caused by alcohol consumption. However, the Chief Superintendent underlined that thanks to the work of the police, the area around Piccadilly Circus was not as rowdy as it had been in the preceding years. He made explicit reference to the articles published by the *Sunday Graphic* which exaggerated their description of the state of affairs in the West End. The area had been affected by a slight deterioration "due to a general loosening of morals," but it was not as bad as the editor of the journal had suggested.[97]

The coverage of court cases involving homosexuality influenced the government to form the Wolfenden Committee in 1954, a Home Office committee of inquiry into prostitution and homosexuality to protect public decency and eradicate prostitution. The committee recommended that homosexual behaviour between consenting adults over twenty-one years old in private should no longer be considered a criminal offence.[98]

[96] TNA MEPO 2/9367/1B
[97] TNA MEPO 2/9367/4A
[98] On the Wolfenden Committee see Brian Lewis, *Wolfenden's Witnesses: Homosexuality in Postwar Britain* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2016).

Nevertheless, along with press campaigns there were other descriptions that contrasted the general picture of an improvement in the West End outlined by documents such as the aforementioned police report. In a similar way to what happened before the war, in the 1950s several writers described the area, especially Soho, as a place of immorality and crime. For instance, the journalist Arthur Tietjen, who was a reporter for the conservative newspaper *Daily Mail* published a book on Soho in 1956, significantly titled *Soho: London's Vicious Circle*. Using a language that highlighted what he deemed to be the district that brought vice to London, he linked entertainment provided by various establishments to the bad situation in the area:

> Soho, as such, with its labyrinth of narrow streets and alleys, its underground clubs, and its eternal fascination for all those who are criminally inclined, has become a breeding ground of crime and a hotbed of vice. It is a disgrace to the largest city in the world.

Tietjen continued by suggesting a complete rebuilding of Soho that would definitively change the area. He did not agree with those who believed that "whatever the planners did to improve the district, Soho would remain the hub of the spinning wheel of vice in London because of its proximity to theatres, fashionable restaurants, hotels and nightclubs." On the contrary, if the area was rebuilt completely the bad reputation would not survive for "once the parasites were evicted, there would not be another district in London big enough to house them."[99]

Similar claims against urban decadence occurred in Paris in the post-war years. The matter of homosexuality in urban spaces where homosexual men gathered was an issue that attracted attention. For instance, in 1948 the French journalist Robert Cusin published an article in the journal *L'Aurore*, with the significant title "Paris ne doit pas devenir le Berlin de 1920." The journalist referred to so-called "special" clubs where homosexuals gathered and where there were shows in which men were dressed as women:

[99] Tietjen, *Soho. London's Vicious Circle*, 145–46.

> Les six girls frôlent en se dandinant les tables où pétille le champagne. L'orchestre scande le refrain. La sale de cabaret est archicomble. Et ces girls sont des hommes. Quel écœurement. Quel scandale. Dans Paris, dans notre ville, dans la plus belle ville du monde, prolifèrent maintenant les établissement spéciaux.

The language used was very harsh, describing the situation as a scandal and calling homosexuals "les invertis." The article suggested that the number of these kinds of places and of small bars frequented by homosexuals had increased after the war:

> Avant la guerre, il y avait dans la capitale très exactement trois mauvais lieux où se réunissaient les invertis. En 1948, il existe 15 boîtes de nuit présentant des "spectacles" dont les protagonistes sont exclusivement des hommes déguisés en femmes. Quant au nombre des petits bars fréquentés par les invertis il se monte à plusieurs dizaines. Franchement, c'est intolérable.[100]

In addition, Cusin wondered if the police were acting effectively in order to stop this phenomenon. The journalist recognised that they could not prosecute club owners with any tougher measures than a three-month closure, because clubs had the necessary authorisation and often had protection, too. However, it did not seem that the police had done all that they could to solve the problem. Moreover, as the issue did not concern public order, Cusin affirmed that only the intervention of the government could change the situation through new legislation.

In France legislation defining homosexuality as a crime did not exist since the crime of sodomy had been annulled in 1791. The legislation was completely different to Britain where specific laws prohibited homosexual acts in the late nineteenth century, and homosexuality was considered an offence until 1957.[101] However, during the nineteenth century mechanisms of surveillance were in place in France and homosexuality was noted and commented on in police

[100] Robert Cusin, "Paris ne doit pas devenir le Berlin de 1920," Press Clipping, APP DB 415.
[101] Florence Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe Vol. I & II: Berlin, London, Paris 1919-1939*, vol. I–II (Algora Publishing, 2006), 306–22. On the history of homosexuality in London see Randolph Trumbach, 'London', in *Queer Sites: Gay Urban Histories Since 1600* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 90–111.

reports concerning criminal activities.[102] In the interwar years, an increased visibility of the homosexual scene with specific bars and clubs, influenced local authorities to implement punishing measures and monitor homosexual activities, especially in port cities. Indeed, one of the main concerns that authorities had was the link between the navy and prostitution, including male prostitution, which created a circuit connecting Paris with sailors staying in French ports.[103]

The first act on homosexuality was enacted by the Vichy government on 6th August 1942 when Marshal Pétain amended Article 334 of the French Penal Code which punished anyone who committed "unnatural acts" with a minor of one's own sex below the age of twenty-one for their personal pleasure; while for heterosexuals, the age for sexual consent remained thirteen. After the war the provisional government under Charles de Gaulle did not repeal the legislation. On the contrary it enacted an ordinance on 8th February 1945 which reaffirmed the principle of the 1942 law regarding the understood necessity to prevent the corruption of minors.[104] It was in this context that Cusin called for the introduction of a new legislation to deal with the proliferation of cabarets and bars frequented by homosexuals. For Cusin, the state of affairs regarding the "insolent exposition of vice" in Paris was so alarming that it could almost be compared to Berlin in the 1920s. Therefore, he urged the Minister of Interior to take effective action against these places, with determination similar to that of his predecessors in the years before the war, which he judged positively:

> Si le ministre de l'Intérieur trouve que voir Paris égaler le Berlin de 1920 dans l'exposition insolente du vice est sans importance, il a tort. L'affaire est plus sérieuse qu'il ne le suppose, car elle entre dans le cadre du relâchement général de l'autorité. Nous connaissons des ministres de l'Intérieur qui, avant-guerre, n'auraient pas attendu qu'il y ait, à Paris, 15 cabarets et 50 bars réservés aux invertis des deux sexes pour manier vigoureusement le balai.[105]

[102] Scott Eric Gunther, *The Elastic Closet: A History of Homosexuality in France, 1942-Present* (Basingstoke and New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009), 6–22.
[103] Tamagne, *A History of Homosexuality in Europe*.
[104] Michael D. Sibalis, 'Homophobia, Vichy France, and the "Crime of Homosexuality": The Origins of the Ordinance of 6 August 1942', *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian and Gay Studies* 8, no. 3 (2002): 301–18; Gunther, *The Elastic Closet*, 26–34. On the history of homosexuality in Paris see Michael D. Sibalis, 'Paris', in *Queer Sites: Gay Urban Histories Since 1600* (London and New York: Routledge, 1999), 10–37.
[105] Robert Cusin, "Paris ne doit pas devenir le Berlin de 1920," Press Clipping, APP DB 415.

Cusin called for the closure of homosexual clubs and asked that the Municipal Council of Paris put pressure on the Minister in order to stop the "scandalous overabundance of special clubs" and the "unacceptable exhibitionism" of people frequenting them.[106]

Action taken by Municipal Councils produced some results, which were noted by another article published in January 1949 in the journal *Combat*. The article reported that the police had closed three "special nightclubs," and had announced exceptional measures of surveillance of nightclubs hosting those kind of shows that led to the modification of some of them.[107]

After the war the police in Paris dealt with clubs and bars for reasons of public order and for the control of the kind of entertainment provided in the premises. However, a new legislation brought a change, giving the national level of authority the right to authorise the establishment of places of entertainment. On 13th October 1945 the government enacted the Ordinance n.45-2339 which aimed at combining extant provisions and increase their effectiveness. The ordinance established that all the places that provided entertainment had to obtain the authorisation from the Ministry of National Education and no longer from the Préfecture de Police de Paris, thus centralising this procedure.[108] Yet in some cases the central authority asked the opinion of the Préfecture before issuing the authorisation, as happened in 1955 with regard to the club La Boule Blanche located in Montparnasse. The Préfecture de Police sent a report to the Ministry on 24th August 1955, which examined the company headed by the owner of the cabaret Madame Carrias and gave a favourable opinion about the request.[109]

Authorisations on the running of places of entertainment were managed by the police. One of the ways through which authorities exercised control over clubs was the issue of authorisations of clubs' opening hours. For instance, on 18th August 1950 the police refused to accept a request made by M. René Cohen, manager of the Bar Parisien in Montmartre, to renew the authorisation to keep the bar open all night. The police report stated that the year before they had issued the authorisation to let him host people working in local publishing companies after 2 a.m., but workers no longer went to the bar because it was frequented for the most part by people of questionable morals and female prostitutes. In addition, the police had already

[106] "Nous demandons au Conseil Municipal de Paris qu'il agisse sans retard auprès du minister de l'Intérieur pour que soit enfin mis un terme à la scandaleuse surabondance des boîtes spéciales et à l'exhibitionnisme inadmissible des invertis et de ceux qui en vivent," ibid.
[107] "Le Préfet de police ordonne la fermeture de trois boîtes de nuit d'un genre spécial," Press Clipping, APP DB 415.
[108] Ordonnance n° 45-2339 du 13 Octobre 1945 relative aux spectacles, https://www.legifrance.gouv.fr/affichTexte.do?cidTexte=JORFTEXT000000888967&dateTexte=20180706
[109] AN 19930049/13 "Cabaret La Boule Blanche" cat.5 n.3613 Mme Carrias Marie née Carias

opened a proceeding against the establishment following an incident between a police officer and the manager Joseph Chabat, a man of Algerian origin who was running the bar in the owner's absence.[110]

Another way through which authorities exercised power over clubs was the issue of authorisation for the use of recorded music on the premises. For instance, in 1954 the Parisian police approved the request to use recorded music by Madame Guilliams, the owner of the Arlett's Bar located in rue Pigalle. The woman had taken over the establishment in December 1953, after various changes in ownership. In July 1946 the bar had been closed for three months after a shooting occurred inside the premises. At that time the bar was called Le Hollandais, and was owned by a Frenchwoman and managed by a Frenchman from Corsica. The bar had a bad reputation. A report dated 27th July 1946 and addressed to the Directeur du Contentieux des Archives et de la Securité, described it as a habitual meeting place for particularly dangerous people.[111] When Madame Guilliams, a Frenchwoman of the Seine region took over the bar, she requested an authorisation to use recorded music on the premises until 2 a.m., which her predecessor Madame Morgan had obtained. According to the rules, the authorisation could be given providing the adherence of several conditions among which were the acquisition of music rights and prevention of people from dancing and singing on the premises. The police report dated 11th January 1954 indicates that authorities made enquiries about the morals of the person applying for the authorisation and made inside observations on clubs monitoring the type of clientele that frequented them. It noted that information regarding Madame Guillams' morals was favourable, and the bar was frequented for the greater part by American soldiers whose presence had not provoked incident. Therefore, her request could be approved for a trial period of three months.[112]

The issue of public order was at the centre of police action not only inside clubs but also in the streets, as an article published in the journal *L'artiste musicien de Paris* in 1956 shows. The article referred to the problem caused by the presence of unemployed musicians occupying Place Pigalle. A few months before, the police were forced to establish a police patrol due to the crowds of unemployed musicians who obstructed the circulation and bothered local shopkeepers. The article blamed authorities for the situation, which was the result of their disengagement from the music profession, and to the reasons behind the condition of

[110] APP DA 758
[111] APP DA 758/1363
[112] APP DA 758/3727

unemployment that many musicians had to face, including the failure to respect employment measures for foreign musicians, black labour, and the absence of a policy about the performing arts. The Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens invited musicians gathering in the square to avoid causing trouble, and proposed a solution to the problem by creating a service of advertisements reserved for unemployed musicians who were members of the union in order to establish a direct link between them and bandleaders.[113]

In the British context, musicians had to deal with another form of state intervention in the music scene. During the war the British government had introduced a special purchase tax for goods that were considered "luxuries," including phonographic records. In 1948, the purchase tax was extended to musical instruments. On 17th April 1948, on the front page, the *Melody Maker* lamented the negative impact that the measure would have on the music industry and the musical profession. First, musical instruments were not to be considered luxury goods, but were the tools of a man's profession. Second, the tax could put the survival of musical culture in Britain at risk if youth could not afford to buy instruments. Finally, the editor asked rhetorically if while during wartime, instruments were considered necessary for maintaining morale, why it had to suffer after the war ended. The protest had united all sections of the musical industry and profession over a measure that was perceived to be against "the development of music as a cultural force" in Britain."[114]

While in London the West End continued to be the main area where the music scene developed, in the post-war years the liveliness of Paris music and entertainment scene shifted towards the *rive gauche*. Montparnasse continued to be an area where Caribbean artists performed in Caribbean-style clubs, such as La Canne à Sucre which opened in December 1944 in rue Sainte Beuve, with an inaugural night with the singer Moune de Rivel. Samuel Castendet's orchestra played there and Castendet also ran the club.[115] Still, Saint-Germain-des-Prés and the Latin Quartier became lively areas where a new young generation of musicians performed. The *caves*, underground cellar clubs, appeared in the narrow streets and became crucial spaces in the music scene of 1950s Paris.[116]

The polymath Boris Vian in his *Manuel de Saint-Germain-des-Prés*, published in 1950, described the liveliness of the area during the post-war years. One of the most successful *caves*

[113] Jean Berson, "Place Pigalle," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XXXIX, no. 358 (Juillet-Août 1956): 85.
[114] "The Case for the Remission of the Purchase Tax on Instruments," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 767 (17 April 1948): 1
[115] AN 920486/6 "La Canne à Sucre" cat.5 n.2953 Castendet Samuel;
[116] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 246–48; Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas*, 70; Vihlen McGregor, *Jazz and Postwar French Identity*, 30–33.

was the Tabou, located in rue Dauphine. The place had already functioned as a café, and in the aftermath of the war it was the only place to remain open after midnight. In April 1947 a small group of young Frenchmen including people working in clubs as barmen and artists, transformed the *cave* into a club that provided musical entertainment. The club soon became a meeting place for intellectuals and artists including Jean-Paul Sartre, Albert Camus and Boris Vian himself, who formed a band that played there, performing various genres of dance music.[117]

In 1949 an article published in the *Melody Maker* gave an account of the atmosphere that one could experience at the Tabou. The Editor described that the place as very small, and when he entered the club a five-piece band was playing "with more drive than technique, its members all sporting smoked glasses, bop haircuts and tartan shirts in the accepted fashion." Most clients were students, which the Editor labelled "the new Paris intelligentsia – followers of Existentialism." He was very impressed by the way in which these young people danced, and by the lively and diverse form of entertainment he experienced in the club:

> On a floor as big as a postage-stamp, they indulged in the most exciting and hair-raising jitterbugging I have ever seen. Girls were thrown in the air with monotonous regularity – couples capered, jumped, wiggled and slithered with reckless abandon…And, in the middle of all the excitement, the band stopped playing and one of the customers stood up and recited poetry, beautifully movingly and in appreciative silence. By popular demand, he gave three encores…?"[118]

The years 1946-1959 are considered the golden era of Saint-Germain-des-Prés.[119] The historian Rosemary Wakeman has pointed to the importance of different spaces in Saint-Germain-des-Prés such as *caves*, cafés, and streets, as emblematic of a new youth culture that emerged in the 1950s. This differentiation of places matched with a differentiation of the kind of entertainment they offered e.g. various genres of music constituted a "form of spatial mapping," dance, jam sessions, and concerts that animated the local music scene which soon

[117] Boris Vian, *Manuel de Saint-Germain-Des-Prés* (Paris: Pauvert, 1997), 112–19.
[118] "On the Beat in Paris…with the Editor," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 823 (14 May 1949): 4.
[119] Éric Dussault, 'Le Milieu Du Jazz à Saint-Germain-Des-Prés de 1945 à 1960: Mythes et Réalité', *French Cultural Studies* 23, no. 1 (2012): 31.

became an attraction for tourists.[120] Boris Vian revealed this diversity in the description of another *cave* operating in the post-war years located in rue Saint-Benoît: the Méphisto. The club was frequented by had the same clients as the Tabou, who descended to the basement of the Méphisto to chat, dance, and sit to listen to the music of a pick-up which did not only feature jazz but also tango and rumba; styles of music that one could not hear at the Tabou. However, the club lost its customer base soon after it transformed this aspect.[121]

The rapid changes on the *rive gauche* with clubs opening one after another show the liveliness of the entertainment scene. The police played a role and in various instances they intervened on the basis of security regulations to which clubs had to conform. This occurred in the case of Le Lorientais, the first *cave* that opened in the Latin Quarter. The club was forced to close at the end of 1948 because it did not comply with the law about security. The Vieux Colombier, too, which opened on the premises beneath the theatre with the same name in December 1948, had to close shortly afterwards for a similar reason. However, the Vieux Colombier reopened and became a successful place where the orchestra of Claude Luter played, after leaving Le Lorientais, and where Sidney Bechet performed.[122]

The young generation played a crucial role in the Parisian music scene of the late 1940s and 1950s. Young musicians and entertainers performed in clubs, and in some cases they were involved in management, too. In addition, young people formed a great part of the clients of the entertainment venues, including many students who frequented the area because it was close to where the University of Paris was based. In 1948 a new club opened and was to become a crucial place in the music scene of Paris, namely the Club Saint-Germain. Located in rue Saint-Benoît, the club opened on 11th June 1948. The same people who were involved in the management of the Tabou became managers at the new club. Among them was Boris Vian who played an important role dealing with the selection of musicians who performed there. Primarily devoted to jazz music, the Club Saint-Germain hosted French musicians, especially those linked to the Hot Club de France, but also American musicians including great American stars such as Duke Ellington, Miles Davis, and Coleman Hawkins.[123]

Boris Vian was the target of an investigation by French authorities which shows another form of state intervention with regard to artists e.g. a policing of the type of works that they

[120] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 251–52.
[121] Vian, *Manuel de Saint-Germain-Des-Prés*, 124.
[122] Dussault, 'Le Milieu Du Jazz à Saint-Germain-Des-Prés', 40–41; Vian, *Manuel de Saint-Germain-Des-Prés*, 124–26.
[123] Jean-Paul Caracalla, *Saint-Germain-Des-Prés*, 2nd ed. (Paris: La Table Ronde, 2017), 124–45.

produced. Indeed, the case of Boris Vian is illustrative of the way in which French authorities used this kind of monitoring activity for the personal dossiers that they redacted. In May 1949 the Minister of Interior introduced a ban on the circulation and distribution on the French soil of the novel "I shall spit on your graves" that Vian had published in 1946 under the pseudonym "Vernon Sullivan." Subsequently, he had translated the novel into French with the title "J'irai cracher sur vos tombes".[124] Thereafter, whenever the police made enquiries on Vian, they always mentioned the inquiry on the novel. For instance, in October 1949 the police made a report about the organisation Hot Club Universitaire founded a year before by Vian and Charles Delaunay. The report noticed that the aims of the organisation were to spread jazz music among students, and made enquiries on the founders, pointing to the fact that Vian had been prosecuted for outrage against public morals.[125]

In the post-war years the *rive gauche* was the centre of cultural turmoil and artistic innovation. The proliferation of clubs and cafés was crucial for a young generation of artists who found new spaces where they could experiment with new artistic forms. The fascination with American music was a fundamental element for young musicians, and it included both the more traditional New Orleans style of jazz and the newly emerging style of bebop. However, the music environment of the *rive gauche* was not confined to jazz music; it also involved other genres such as early forms of rock' n' roll that were developing but also French songs written by young poets such as Jacques Prévert.[126]

The *cave* La Rose Rouge is a good example of this mixing. Located in Rue de la Harpe, it was owned by the Senegalese Feral Benga, who had been a star dancer in the 1930s at the Folies Bergère together with Joesephine Baker, and an icon of the Harlem Renaissance. Benga had stayed in New York during the late 1930s and 1940s being active in the circle of the movement, before returning to Paris in 1947.[127] In 1953 the American Magazine *Jet* in a short article devoted to Paris, gave space to the Benga's "internationally-famous" club. The club featured an African cabaret with performances from African students enrolled at Paris universities. It was the "most original show" in the city, and for dances and songs they only used authentic native African material.[128] Interestingly, the French singer of Guadeloupian origin Moune de Rivel performed at the club after she had returned from her experience in New York in the post-

[124] APP GA 311/2; APP GA 311/2C
[125] APP GA 311/4
[126] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 258; Dussault, 'Le Milieu Du Jazz à Saint-Germain-Des-Prés', 32–36.
[127] James Smalls, 'Féral Benga's Body', in *Africa in Europe: Studies in Transnational Practice in the Long Twentieth Century* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2013), 99–119.
[128] "Gerri Major's Society. Paris Chit Chat," *Jet* IV, no. 11 (23 July 1953): 46.

war years. In addition, the resident band of the club was the Afro-Caribbean orchestra lead by the Martiniquais musician Barel Coppet. Boris Vian affirmed that Benga gave a group of young people the possibility to open a club in the basement of his place, and the club had great success. Shortly afterwards, one of them opened another cave with the name Club de la Rose Rouge in Rue de Rennes, where one could see a show of high quality.[129]

The connection between youth culture and new musical developments which took place in social spaces of Paris has been observed in the case of London, too. Jerry White has underlined how in the late 1940s and 1950s "music was the common ground that connected, if not united, black migration with the teenage revolution."[130] This connection had a specific spatial dimension, namely the café. The journalist Arthur Tietjen observed in 1956 that the connection between youth and the cafés in Soho not only had effects on the spatial dimensions with cafés appearing in local streets, but also on the trade of more "traditional" spaces. Tietjen described his encounter with the owner of a well-known pub in Soho who complained about the negative impact on his business that the consumption of coffee by young people had:

> The proprietor of a famous Soho pub complained bitterly through his fine moustaches that the young people's addiction to coffee was ruining his trade. 'Times are changing,' […]. 'Today they make love on café, or so they would have one believe.' His note of regret was laced with disdain.[131]

Moreover, as several scholars have noticed, in the 1950s meeting places for young people were venues that did not sell liquor such as membership clubs, milk bars and above all coffee bars, which spread enormously. As Jerry White has written, the 1950s were the heyday of the London café and Soho was the premier location of the "coffee-house craze."[132]

In 1946 Stanley Jackson in his guide to Soho explained that the high cost of liquor in clubs drove people who could not afford it to frequent bars and cafés where prices were cheaper:

[129] Vian, *Manuel de Saint-Germain-Des-Prés*, 126.
[130] White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 340.
[131] Tietjen, *Soho. London's Vicious Circle*, 151.
[132] White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 340.

> Many cannot afford club prices for liquor and you will find them drinking in public bars in Dean Street or Charing Cross Road or using small, cheap cafés off Wardour Street as their rendezvous. Here they will sit for hours drinking, arguing, laughing or gambling.[133]

As they did not serve alcohol, coffee bars were not subject to licensing laws. Furthermore, they were 'members only' clubs that charged a small joining fee, a fact that made them neither wholly private nor public spaces. These two elements made police monitoring more complicated.[134]

In addition, black immigration from the Caribbean – and also from Africa - was one of the new elements that influenced London's nightlife in the post-war years, and the genres of music that migrants brought with them, such as calypso was well-suited to informal small performance venues like cafés.[135]

In his description of his tour throughout Soho, Tietjen gave an account of the atmosphere that one could feel in the local clubs and streets, and the variety of people who frequented them:

> At the entrance to a Jazz Club my progress was halted by a crowd of youth on the pavement. Teddy boys. Edwardian elegants. Regency Bucks. […] Through the basement grille in the pavement came the wailing notes of a trumpet and the clatter of cymbals playing an ageless Blues, written by a second generation American Jew whose parents emigrated from Zagreb. Across the street on a corner a little group of West African negroes in light grey fedoras and bright blue suits talked together in their strange, clipped tongue, white teeth shining in the darkness. With them was a portly blonde, balanced unsteadily on her high-heeled platform shoes.[136]

[133] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 104.
[134] Jackson, *An Indiscreet Guide to Soho*, 104.
[135] White, *London in the Twentieth Century*, 338–39.
[136] Tietjen, *Soho. London's Vicious Circle*, 151–52.

This passage painted a lively portrait of a mixed Soho: a group of wealthy young people, so-called Teddy Boys who were young English men adopting the style of the Edwardian era and were linked to the spread of rock and roll music, frequented a jazz club in Soho where a second generation American Jew with Balkan origins performed, while on the other side of the street a group of black migrants from Africa chatted on a corner.

In the post-war years several jazz clubs opened in London. They were small performing places which until the mid 1960s were cheap enough not to feel exclusive, even if they required a membership fee. In some cases musicians opened these clubs such as Robert Feldman who in 1942 opened Feldman's Swing Club as a Sunday night venue in Mack's Restaurant, located at 100 Oxford Street.[137]

In Soho in the early 1950s, one could feel the influence of the new developments occurring in Paris. An article published in the *Melody Maker* in June 1952 described the opening of a club, called Club du Faubourg, which appeared beneath a little café in Old Compton Street in the premises where other clubs had previously operated. French students had transformed the club by recreating the urban landscape of the Paris metro in the small basement club. "Ghosts of the past and the strident echoes have departed, exorcised by the spirit of St. Germain. […] The stale smoke and mustiness of careless occupation have been swept away by the refreshing breezes of the Left Bank of the Seine," wrote the journalist Tony Brown. He noticed that even if the club was not the best jazz club in London, it established itself as "the West End club with a difference."[138] In 1955 another article observed that London clubs were "going all French" and described the atmosphere that one could feel in one these Soho clubs, where Vincent Montefusco the "pioneer of London's Paris-style *caves*" had opened his latest club called Côte d'Azur. Within the club the dense crowd was composed of Londoners, French students, West Indians and visiting Americans. They listened to music performed by a versatile resident band and attended the floor-show performed by the Trinidadian choreographer Boscoe Holder's troupe entitled "An Evening in Martinique," in which Holder played the piano and sang calypsos.[139] His style was in line with the Afro-Caribbean tradition, and he played a crucial role in spreading it in Britain. Holder had formed his own dance company, called Holder and his Caribbean Dancers, in London, where he arrived in April 1950 with his wife - who was the company's leading dancer - and their son. Shortly afterwards, in June 1950, the company

[137] Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 105.
[138] Tony Brown, "Paris Students Bring the Left Bank to a London Basement," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 978 (14 June 1952): 12.
[139] Peter Leslie, "Calypso Night on London's Left Bank," *Melody Maker* XXXI, (8 October 1955): 11.

appeared on a BBC television show called "Bal Creole", in which Holder introduced the steel drums, a typical Trinidadian percussion instrument.[140]

As the Trinidadian bandleader Russell Henderson affirmed, the urban context in which musicians settled in Europe was crucial for their encounters with other musicians, including Caribbean musicians. Indeed, he recalled that in London there were few musicians from the Caribbean islands, who in most cases did not know each other in their homelands. They met in England, and once they arrived there they all mixed.[141]

The new clubs and cafés that appeared in both Paris and London in the post-war years and over the 1950s were spaces where musicians encountered each other and experimented with new forms of music. They were crucial parts of a milieu that allowed for new musical exchanges which marked a prolific period of musical creativity.

[140] Geoffrey MacLean, *Boscoe Holder* (Port of Spain: Maclean Publishing, 1994).
[141] Russell Henderson, interview by Val Wilmer, 14 October 1993, C122/183-184, BL NSA.

The post-war years marked a period of fruitful musical exchange and experimentation. In France the organisation of two jazz festivals in 1948 and 1949 was very important in this sense. The Nice Festival took place from 22nd to 28th February 1948, and the critic Hughes Panassié was the artistic director. The headliner of the festival was the great American star Louis Armstrong with his band, and the festival featured other American and European musicians, including French musicians such as Claude Luter.[142] Boris Vian in an article in the journal *Jazz Hot* criticised the fact that only one man was responible for the selection of musicians playing at the festival. Panassié invited orchestras he knew, therefore the festival presented almost exclusively one form of jazz with limited arrangements, played by small bands. Vian lamented that even if jazz had evolved, the festival did not feature representatives of the "modern school," while it was necessary to initiate the public to the music that they did not know.[143]

One year later another international jazz festival took place from 8th to 15th May 1949 in Paris at Salle Pleyel in the VIII arrondissement. The festival was organised on behalf of the Hot Club de France by its president Charles Delaunay together with other people working in the entertainment circuit. As the editors of the journal *Jazz-Hot* observed, American musicians Sidney Bechet and Charlie Parker were the headliners, and they represented the two different jazz styles that coexisted at the time.[144] On 5th July 1948 Pierre-André Avon, Deputy Secretary General of the Hot Club de France had requested the rehabilitation of Sidney Bechet, who had been expelled from France in 1929, in order to play a concert organised by the club.[145] Bechet's international reputation as a musician and the success that he had had at the Paris Jazz Festival led to the issuance of temporary residence permits by the police section dealing with foreigners, and eventually to the withdrawal of the expulsion measure by the Ministry of Interior in 1951.[146]

The Paris festival hosted other American musicians such as Miles Davis and Tad Dameron, European musicians from various countries including Belgium, England, Italy, Sweden and

[142] "World Jazz-Stars for Nice," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 756 (31 January 1948): 5; Numéro Spécial consacré au Festival de Nice, *Jazz Hot* XIV, no. 20 (Février 1948).
[143] "Le jazz a évolué depuis le stade de l'improvisation collective, et il ne faut pas se contenter d'offrir au public ce qu'il a envie d'entendre […]. Il faut initier le public à la musique qu'il ne connait pas encore – et c'est pourquoi il fallait aussi outre Armstrong et le grand orchestra, faire venir quelques représentants de l'école moderne." Boris Vian, "Le Festival de Nice," *Jazz Hot* XIV, no. 21 (Mars 1948): 5-6.
[144] "Festival International 1949," *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 32 (Avril 1949): 5.
[145] APP IC1.136.526 Lettre signé Avon, 5 Juillet 1948.
[146] APP IC1.136.526/E 182.691 Compte rendu de notification du retrait d'un arrêté d'expulsion 5 Avril 1951.

Switzerland, as well as French musicians among whom were Claude Luter and his Lorientais and the Quintette du Hot Club de France with Django Reinhardt.[147] Interestingly, an advertisement published in the number of *Jazz Hot* devoted to the festival, said that special records of the top American musicians appearing at the festival, Charlie Parker and Sidney Bechet particularly, were distributed by the company Swing, and that the Parisian record store Au Discobole had purchased a large number of records from artists who were to perform at the Festival.[148] The festival had press coverage in the *Melody Maker*, which defined Paris as "the jazz centre of the world." Even if titles in the journal paid attention to the ambivalent reception that the English Vic Lewis' orchestra received, the editor reported all the concerts.[149] In an article on Paris nightlife and the opening of the festival, what the editor called the "British contingent," was well represented with several prominent young musicians, "old friends of British musicians" including Rudolph Dunbar, and members of London Jazz Club who had arrived in Paris to attend the concerts. Significantly, the paper concluded with the description of the editor writing the article at 1.30 in the morning in a Parisian club where Denis Preston was arguing with the English-speaking owner about the "anti-social character of bebop;" a fact that shows the importance of these kinds of events as moments and spaces of encounters between musicians.[150] Moreover, the festival gave young musicians active in the Parisian music scene the chance to listen to and play with great African American stars, and to improve their technique through direct contact with them, as it happened to the Parisian clarinettist and saxophonist Claude Luter who played with Sidney Bechet.[151] Interestingly, Luter had begun to play the clarinet in the early 1940s after hearing the Martiniquan Alexandre Stellio at a Parisian nightclub. He was so struck by Stellio's music, he felt he wanted to play that instrument as beautifully as it had been played by the Caribbean musician. He developed his interest in jazz through recordings issued by the label Swing, and he especially admired Sidney Bechet. He felt very honoured to begin his collaboration with him at the festival.[152]

[147] Numéro Spécial consacré au Festival de Jazz 1949, *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 33 (Mai 1949); "Vic Lewis Band for Great Paris Jazz Festival," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 817 (2 April 1949): 5; "Full Programme for Great Paris Jazz Festival," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 819 (16 April 1949): 5.
[148] Numéro Spécial consacré au Festival de Jazz 1949, *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 33 (Mai 1949): 24.
[149] "Paris becomes the Jazz Centre of the World. Vic Lewis Too 'Progressive' for French Fans. British bands get rough treatment: Bechet and 'Hot Lips' stars of Festival," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 823 (14 May 1949): 1; "With the 'MM'at the Paris Jazz Festival," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 823 (14 May 1949): 4-6.
[150] "On the Beat in Paris…with the Editor," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 823 (14 May 1949): 4-5.
[151] Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas*, 71–78.
[152] Fabrice Zammarchi, *Claude Luter. Saint Germain Dance* (Lausanne: Favre, 2009), 25–27.

After the festivals, there were more opportunities to see jazz in Paris. Three International Salons of Jazz were held in Paris in 1950, 1952 and 1954 at the Salle Pleyel where American and European musicians performed. For instance, Dizzy Gillespie was the headliner of the 1952 edition.[153] Enthusiasm for jazz was widespread and jazz concerts were held in various Parisian clubs, especially in Saint-Germain-des-Près and the Latin Quarter but also in the well-known Blue Note club located in the VIII arrondissement, near the Champs Elysées.[154] Furthermore, the Paris Festival came to be considered as an example to follow. Various articles in the *Melody Maker* underlined the importance of organising a festival of jazz in Britain on the model of the Parisian festival. For instance, an article published on 21st May, noted that the most bitter lesson of the festival was the opportunity to benefit from hearing great stars from the United States while in Britain they did not have the permission to perform. Therefore, people in Britain remained "musical outcasts," learning of all the developments only through records. This was especially important for young British musicians. Indeed, those who were in Paris had the chance to play together with the great stars who appreciated their value. Thus, the article underlined how significant it could be for them to have regular chances to hear the great stars:

> When the British boys sat-in around the Paris clubs last week, Charlie Parker and the other American stars were amazed at their ability. […] And if our young musicians can earn such encomiums when they are so far away from the people who make modern music, can you imagine how they would improve if they had reasonably regular opportunities of hearing those stars at first hand, and could absorb (not copy) their ideas? The music of this country urgently needs the fillip that only the visit of American bands and stars can give it.

The article also pointed to the educational value of these encounters:

[153] "Dizzy Drops Everything to Play at Paris Jazz Fair. Bands from Italy, Sweden, Belgium, France – but none from Britain," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 964 (8 March 1952): 1; "Dizzy Clowned, but He Never Lost that Melodic Flown," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 968 (5 April 1952): 6-7.

[154] Elizabeth Vihlen, 'Jammin' on the Champs Elysées. Jazz, France and the 1950s', in *'Here, There and Everywhere.' The Foreign Politics of American Popular Culture* (Hanover and London: University Press of New England, 2000), 158; Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas*, 61; Max Jones, "Post-Festival Paris. A Review of the Bop, Jazz and Swing Scene," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 834 (30 July 1949): 3.

> The whole question was now no longer one of 'reciprocity,' Trade Unionism, dollars, or any other economic or political angle. It is purely a question of education and musical culture.

The big lesson of the Paris Jazz Festival, the article concluded, was that such an event was the greatest stimulus that could be given to dance music in a country, and "Britain must not be left behind."[155]

The occasion for making that reality came with the Festival of Britain; a national exhibition and fair that took place in the summer of 1951 throughout the United Kingdom, with its main location on London's South Bank.[156] As early as 1949, guitarist Ivor Mairants, who was a member of the Music Development Committee of the Musicians' Union, urged musicians and bandleaders to contact union branches with their proposals in order to arrange interviews with regional directories of the Music Department of the festival.[157] In 1950 London City Council approached the National Federation of Jazz Organisations to organise jazz concerts at the South Bank hall, which was under construction.[158] However, the space devoted to dance music at the festival was limited to two jazz concerts at the Royal Festival Hall on the South Bank in July 1951, and to the music played by "two third-class bands" at the Dance Pavilion at Battersea Park in the South West of London, as an article published in March 1951 in the *Melody Maker* lamented. Dance music at the festival did not have a proper presentation: "once again dance music is the unwanted babe – and baby's been left outside." It was time to put pressure on the Arts Council to influence them to accept the spread and importance of dance music in Britain. Moreover, if properly presented, dance bands and dance music could have an economic impact as a "sure source of revenue which could help to carry some of the not-so-successful arts, and thus save a small part of the millions of pounds that this Festival is to cost us."[159] Still, the fact

[155] "The Lesson of the Paris Jazz Festival," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 824 (21 May 1949): 4
[156] For an analysis of the festival see Becky E. Conekin, *The Autobiography of a Nation: The 1951 Exhibition of Britain, Representing Britain in the Post-War World* (Manchester and New York: Manchester University Press, 2003).
[157] Ivor Mairants, "A Jazz and Dance Music Festival in 1951 all depends on *YOU*," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 829 (25 June 1949): 5
[158] "There will be Jazz at 1951 Festival of Britain: LCC Approach NFJO," *Melody Maker* XXVI, no. 885 (22 July 1950): 1
[159] Jack Baverstock, "Two more months to the FESTIVAL, and - Dance Music Has Been Left Out in the Cold," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 911 (3 March 1951): 3.

that Princess Elisabeth was to attend one of the two jazz concerts was considered important to give these events dignity and recognition.[160]

In the week during which the two jazz concerts were scheduled, the National Federation of Jazz Organisations and several London clubs organised a "Festival of Jazz" with special sessions and film shows, including the first public showing in England of the film "Saint Louis Blues" starring the great African American blues singer Bessie Smith. "In answer to the Paris Fairs of recent years, London is to have its own Jazz Festival," a *Melody Maker* article proudly affirmed in June 1951.[161]

The Festival of Britain was also a significant event for Caribbean music in Britain in the early 1950s. The formation of the Trinidad All Steel Percussion Orchestra (TASPO) to represent Trinidad at the festival in London was a successful project. Eleven top steelpan musicians were selected from the best bands in Trinidad, and Lieutenant Joseph Griffith, a former member of the Trinidad Police Band, trained them on the island. They travelled to London where they made their debut at the festival on 26th July 1951. The work that Griffith did was crucial and his decision to create new pans brought a change to the sound of steel band music and made it possible to arrange music with conventional harmony. Therefore, the band was able to present a diverse repertoire with a variety of genres such as Caribbean styles calypsos, sambas, rumbas, but also waltzes, marches and adaptations of classical pieces. The first open-air performance on London's South Bank was also the first time that people in London heard a steel band, and it was very successful. Furthermore, the orchestra performed in various other venues in the city, including the elegant Savoy Hotel, and appeared on BBC radio and television programmes. With the support of the West Indies' Students Association, the Trinidadian actor and singer Edric Connor organised these performances. Connor had arrived in Britain in 1944 and played an important role in the promotion of Caribbean music with his participation in BBC music and variety programmes.[162]

Before travelling back to Trinidad in December 1951, the orchestra performed in Paris and recorded several titles that were published by the French company Vogue, founded by Charles

[160] "Princess Elisabeth to Attend Festival Jazz Concert," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 921 (12 May 1951): 1; "Royalty Honours Jazz," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 931 (21 July 1951): 1.
[161] "Festival Jazz Week Planned By All London Clubs," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 925 (9 June 1951): 1; "Festival of Jazz. Round the Clubs with Mike Nevard," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 929 (7 July 1951): 3.
[162] Stephen Stuempfle, *The Steelband Movement: The Forging of a National Art in Trinidad and Tobago* (University of Pennsylvania Press, 1995), 94–100; Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 69–70; Lloyd Bradley, *Sounds Like London: 100 Years of Black Music in the Capital* (London: Profile Books, 2013), 62–65; Stephen Bourne, 'Connor, Edric Esclus (1913-1968)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, 8 January 2015).

Delaunay.[163] However, one orchestra member, Sterling Betancourt remained in Britain and formed a steel band there. He made his decision while the band was in Paris after a fight between two other players. Incidents of this kind were common in Trinidad. As Stephen Bradley has explained, many of the first players of steel bands were gang members who maintained their affiliations within the bands, and the rivalry between different groups often led to riots and armed conflict. Moreover, the origin of steelpan music in Trinidad, born in the ghetto and derived from the use of scrap material, especially oil drums that US military forces discarded during the Second World War on the island, meant that this music was practically ignored by the music circuit. However, not only did the success that the orchestra had in Britain contribute to the spread of a new form of Caribbean music there, but it gave steel bands greater recognition in the Caribbean, too.[164]

When Sterling Betancourt decided to stay in Britain, he was the only specialist steelpan player in London. Initially, he played solo in venues patronised by Caribbean groups in the West End and in cabaret sets at several Soho clubs. It was in one Soho club that Sterling Betancourt met the Trinidadian pianist Russell Henderson in 1952. Henderson had arrived in London in 1951 for the Festival of Britain and to study piano tuning. Due to a high demand for piano players on the London music scene, he started playing in bands, mainly of jazz and Latin styles. One night Henderson and Sterling Betancourt met in one Soho club and they began playing together. Shortly afterwards Henderson decided to incorporate more steel drums into his shows. Therefore, with the help of Sterling, who taught him to play the steelpan, he formed his own steel band, called the Russell Henderson Steel Band. The band played in clubs and during events organised by Caribbean communities, but also in elegant places for a high society audience, and was very successful.[165]

In the 1950s the producer Denis Preston made a fundamental contribution to the promotion of Caribbean music in Britain. Caribbean musicians in London had already drawn his attention, but it was a trip to New York for the British Decca record company in 1948 that led Preston to debut in the recording industry. During his stay in the city, Preston heard original Trinidadian calypsos in Harlem, and when he returned to London he proposed the production of calypsos in Britain to managers of the label EMI-Parlophone. The arrival of calypsonians among Caribbean migrants was crucial for Preston to produce this kind of music, and he convinced the

[163] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 70; Bradley, *Sounds Like London*, 64; Gibbs, *Calypso and Other Music of Trinidad*, 107–8.
[164] Bradley, *Sounds Like London*, 64–68.
[165] Bradley, 69–77; Henderson, interview.

record company that there was a void in the British market because records released in the United States did not reach Britain due to trading restrictions. The first recording sessions took place at the EMI's Abbey Road studios, in North-West London, in January 1950.[166] As John Cowley has described, these sessions showed the transition occurring among calypsonians with the old generation represented by Lord Beginner, who had made his first records for Decca in New York in the 1930s, and the young generation represented by Lord Kitchener.[167] Moreover, the band that accompanied the singers was Cyril Blake's Calypso Serenaders, led by the Trinidadian trumpeter Cyril Blake, one of the most important Caribbean musicians in the music scene of London in the interwar years. Formed by Caribbean musicians active in the city, the repertoire of the band was often a mix of swing and calypso.[168]

In the early 1950s Preston supervised recording sessions mainly of calypsos but also of Jamaican traditional folksongs for the newly formed company Melodisc Records. The label was founded in 1949 by the American Emil Shalit, who had Jewish and central European roots, together with the English saxophonist Jack Chilkes. Melodisc was one of the independent labels that emerged during these years. The initial idea was to create a company to release American jazz recordings with a British branch run by Chilkes, and an American one run by Shalit. However, Shalit understood that with the arrival of immigrants from the Caribbean, there was space in the market for Caribbean music in Britain. Thus, in addition to licensed music, Melodisc started recording musicians in London. With the supervision of Preston, the company recorded sessions with calypso singers such as Lord Beginner and Lord Kitchener, who in January 1951 recorded the first session with the Freddy Grant's Caribbean Rhythm, led by British Guyanese clarinettist Freddy Grant. As Chilkes recalled years later, Melodisc recorded the songs but had to rely on the record company Decca for record pressing.[169]

Even if in the first years of recording Trinidadian styles were prominent, Melodisc provided an increasing variety of musical repertoire and instrumentation, with Preston supervising recordings of genres such as Jamaican mentos, Martiniquan beguines, Cuban styles and West African music, including Ambrose Campbell's West African Rhythm Brothers, the first West

[166] Wilmer, 'Preston, (Sydney) Denis (1916–1979)'; Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 61–64.
[167] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 66.
[168] John Cowley, 'Cultural "Fusions": Aspects of British West Indian Music in the USA and Britain 1918-51', *Popular Music*, Continuity and Change, 5 (1985): 91; Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 66; Gibbs, *Calypso and Other Music of Trinidad*, 103. On calypso in London see Chapter 3 of Amanda Bidnall, *West Indian Generation: Remaking British Culture in London, 1945-1965* (Liverpool: Liverpool University Press, 2017), 106–31.
[169] Jack Chilkes, interview by Andrew Simons, 29 September 1994, C122/202, BL NSA; Jon Stratton, 'Melting Pot: The Making of Black British Music in the 1950s and 1960s', in *Black Popular Music in Britain Since 1945* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 27–46.

African band formed in London and led by the Nigerian Ambrose Campbell.[170] As Marc Matera has observed, these early recordings of calypso and other Caribbean genres were in fact "hybrids" that borrowed from jazz, Latin American, and African styles.[171]

Shalit and Chilkes had a dispute that eventually led to Chilkes leaving Melodisc in 1952 and starting another company that produced dance music as well as a label for the West Indian and West African markets. Whereas Chilkes left the record business shortly afterwards, Shalit continued recording with Melodisc and replaced Preston with the Trinidadian multi-instrumentalist Rupert Nurse. Nurse had arrived in Britain in 1945 with the all coloured band the Trinidadian All Stars led by Al Jennings. Watching American band shows in Trinidad, Nurse came up with the idea of playing calypso in the style of big band, and so he orchestrated popular calypso for his own big band. Nurse played the saxophone and the bass in various clubs in the West End. It was in one of these clubs that Emil Shalit saw him and offered Nurse the position of musical director and producer at Melodisc. This resulted in Melodisc innovating their repertoire with the production of genuine calypsos with arrangements that created a new combination between calypso and jazz. Melodisc continued to produce music until 1960, when Shalit founded a new company, called Blue Beat, which was devoted to Jamaican music.[172]

Experimentation was one of the main features in the music world in the post-war years. The importance of spaces for performances was a fundamental aspect. For instance, the bassist Coleridge Goode recalled his experience at the Caribbean Club in Piccadilly where he was a member of the resident band with Lauderic Caton and Dick Kats. Goode remembered the years he played at the Caribbean Club as one of the most satisfying periods of his career: "the Caribbean Trio was a highlight of my career. It was the first group I played with in which I felt that I could really express myself fully with my own musical ideas."[173] The club had a special atmosphere with mixed clientele in terms of race and class, which made it possible for the trio to produce interesting music. Indeed, the three players felt completely relaxed playing there, and the music that they performed contrasted with what Goode labelled "the ordinary popular

[170] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 69; Val Wilmer, 'Campbell, Ambrose (1919–2006)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, September 2011), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/97722, accessed 21 Sept 2015].
[171] Matera, *Black London*, 185.
[172] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 70–71; Chilkes, interview; Bradley, *Sounds Like London*, 40–43; Nurse, interview. On the steel pan movement in Britain see: Tom Chatburn, 'Trinidad All Stars: The Steel Pan Movement in Britain', in *Black Music in Britain: Essays on the Afro-Asian Contribution to Popular Music* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 1990), 118–36.
[173] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 51.

dance band thing" the audience usually heard in nightclubs at that time.[174] The strength of the trio derived from their "intricate arrangements," and from the attitude the three musicians had; they wanted to give an "intellectual quality to the music," and they were "musically curious and adventurous, in terms of the musical styles of the time."[175]

This attitude also applied to the sound of the instruments. Both Goode and Caton had an interest in technology. Influenced by American guitarist Charlie Christian, in this period Lauderic Caton developed his ideas about amplifying the guitar electrically to get his own personal sound. Caton was an eclectic guitarist who had built his career playing in various music scenes. He began to play in Trinidad during his youth, and after being active in several bands there, he moved to Martinique in 1938 to work in a music school. From there he travelled to Paris where he played with Martiniquan musicians, and then moved to Belgium. However, in 1940 the outbreak of the war forced him to leave the country and for England. In London Caton worked at bottle parties in Soho and played Afro-Cuban music in elegant clubs with Don Marino Barreto. Caton was one of the first guitarists to play the electric guitar with a plectrum and use an amplifier. His innovative style made him become popular on the jazz scene, also via radio broadcasts and recordings with the Welsh clarinettist Harry Parry.[176] Interestingly, in 1946 at the Caribbean Club, Goode started experimenting with the bass in a similar way to Caton and his guitar. As amplification opened up new possibilities for the guitar as a solo instrument and gave it a new role within a jazz band, Goode thought that the same could apply to the bass, especially because it tended to be considered as a background instrument.[177]

When the Caribbean Trio were performing, Goode recalled, "change was in the air musically."[178] The influence of the new jazz style of bebop was prominent in the late 1940s, and it was completely different from what musicians at the time were used to: "the advent of bebop certainly made a huge difference […] it was a massive onslaught on one's own musical background and at the beginning it was very hard to understand."[179]

Bebop emerged in the early 1940s in the United States as a new style of jazz music developed by a new generation of musicians who departed from the widespread, dance-oriented swing style and created a genre based on fast tempo, harmonic complexity, and instrumental

[174] Goode and Cotterrell, 45–46.
[175] Goode and Cotterrell, 47.
[176] Val Wilmer, 'Caton, Lauderic Rex (1910–1999)', in *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004; online edn, May 2015), [http://www.oxforddnb.com/view/article/74670, accessed 21 Sept 2015]; Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 47–48.
[177] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 48.
[178] Goode and Cotterrell, 51.
[179] Goode and Cotterrell, 66.

virtuosity, played by small bands and not intended for dancing. Among the most influential bebop musicians were saxophonist Charlie Parker and trumpeter Dizzy Gillespie.[180] Charlie Parker was one of the headliners at the 1949 Paris Festival, and the French violinist André Hodeir in *Jazz Hot* wrote that Parker was the centre of attraction at the festival even if he adopted an anti-commercial attitude during shows.[181]

Stéphane Grappelli recalled that in the post-war period several musicians were overwhelmed by the arrival of bebop with American servicemen, including Django Reinhardt. The disorientation that this brought with it amused Grappelli at the beginning, as a natural evolution of jazz, but, while he admired the great representatives of the genres, he criticised mediocre musicians who artificially adopted bebop elements:

> Nous étions un peu désorientés. Au début, ça m'amusait. Je ressentais cela comme la nouvelle vague, comme une évolution naturelle de notre musique. Et puis Parker et Gillespie sont arrivés. De grands musiciens […]. Ce qui me gênait parfois dans le be-bop, c'était l'esprit de système, son côté arithmétique. Par exemple, il fallait toujours placer la fameuse quinte diminuée pour "faire be-bop." Avec les grands, comme Parker, on n'y fait même plus attention. C'est seulement face à des musiciens de moindre envergure qu'on ressent un certain agacement.[182]

The participation of Parker and other American musicians playing the new style of jazz at the festival was strongly endorsed by Charles Delaunay, who in those years supported modern jazz in France.

In 1947 differences of opinion led to a split of the Hot Club de France, with one side advocating a more traditional New Orleans style of jazz, headed by Hughes Panassié, and the other promoting modern jazz led by Charles Delaunay. During the war, life and activities of the two men had differed. Panassié left Paris to reach Montauban in the South of France from where

[180] On bebop see: Thomas Owens, *Bebop: The Music and Its Players* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995); Scott DeVeaux, *The Birth of Bebop: A Social and Musical History* (Berkley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press, 1997).
[181] André Hodeir, "Le Festival 1949," *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 34 (Juin 1949): 7. In the special number that the journal *Jazz-Hot* dedicated to the festival two articles were devoted to Parker: Charles Delaunay and André Hodeir, "Charlie 'Yardbird' Parker," *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 33 (Mai 1949): 9; Boris Vian "Charlie Parker Le Superman du Jazz," *Jazz Hot* XV, no. 33 (Mai 1949): 21.
[182] Grappelli, *Mon Violon*, 128.

he continued to promote jazz music, for example by broadcasting of jazz radio series, which was subsequently prohibited by the Vichy regime. Delaunay remained in Paris, however, where he suppressed the public activity of the Hot Club de France but continued to organise concerts, conferences, and recording sessions despite the very difficult context. In different ways, both men had to deal with restrictions on American and British music by the Nazi regime, including jazz. However, jazz was not prohibited through a ban and the presentation of jazz as French music - songs with French titles played in a French style – allowed several jazz shows to take place while other jazz concerts were held in secret.[183] At the end of the war, Delaunay was an early proponent of bebop, purchasing records from the United States, whereas Panassié promoted more traditional jazz. The distance between Panassié and Delaunay led to the departure of Panassié from the revue *Jazz-Hot* in December 1946, and to the exclusion of Delaunay from the Hot Club de France on 2nd October 1947 when at the general meeting of the organisation Panassié made a long discourse criticising Delaunay. The dispute resulted in several members following Dealunay, leaving the organisation and creating a Federation of Hot Clubs.[184] Moreover, Delaunay together with the French jazz fan Léon Cabat who was a member of the Association Française des Collectionneurs de Jazz, founded the record label Vogue. Starting with an issue on small American labels that specialised in jazz, the company began to record artists who performed at Parisian festivals or were on tour in France, such as Sidney Bechet and Dizzy Gillespie. The company diversified record production of other genres, too, with a particular focus on engagement with new artists, and grew rapidly.[185]

The dispute between Panassié and Delaunay went beyond personal divergences, and involved musical views regarding the evolution of jazz which characterised the debate. On the one hand, there were those like Delaunay who considered the new modern jazz a "music revolution," and an artistic evolution that had developed when the war isolated France, therefore it arrived unexpected and had a strong impact.[186] Similar ideas appeared in the British press. For instance, in an article published in March 1949 in the *Melody Maker*, Denis Preston described bebop as "not merely a new direction in jazz:" it was "the most socially significant development in jazz" since the impact of blues at the beginning of the century. Like blues,

[183] Perchard, *After Django*, 5–6; Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas*, 68–69. On jazz during the Occupation of France see Gérard Régnier, *Jazz et société sous l'Occupation*.
[184] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 159–65; Braggs, *Jazz Diasporas*, 75–76.
[185] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 254–57.
[186] ""Le be-bop était bel et bien une revolution musicale. […] Un tel changement ne s'était pas produit brutalement, du jour au lendemain, comme notre isolement pendant la guerre aurait pu nous le faire croire. Comme toute evolution artistique, celle-ci avait connu une lente incubation." Delaunay, 165.

bebop was a direct legacy of colour conflict in the United States, but while blues had more resignation, bebop was a revolt against musical standards, conventions, and old time jazz based on sing-appeal and dance rhythms, which white people expected black musicians to play. Bebop was not "merely a musical revolt but a social revolt."[187] In another article published in the *Melody Maker* in April 1949, Denis Preston predicted that bebop was likely to be "a one generation phenomenon" as the great representatives of the bebop, who set a standard almost impossible to equal, were not followed by others who contributed to further expand the genre. However, it would pave the way for true progress in many directions, giving renewed value on improvisation, and widening the harmonic possibilities of musicians. Having taken jazz "out of the dance-hall," bebop was essentially musicians' music; "music for the few," which opposed jazz as music for enjoyment, and "music for the many."[188]

On the other hand, there were those who criticised bebop such as Panassié. He defined the evolution of jazz as the outcome of a break that black musicians made with their musical traditions. Instead of working on music of their black tradition, they had incorporated new elements obtained through the study of music which white musicians accused them of lacking. Thus, bebop was a "bastard product," the result of young musicians trying to be closer to the music produced by white musicians. "True jazz" was that of artists such as Armstrong, Ellington and Bechet who had achieved the approval of the whole world and had given it general interest.[189] In the first "Bullettin" that Panassié wrote after his departure from *Jazz-Hot*, he presented Louis Armstrong as the "one and only king of jazz, to whom all the Gillespie are no more than dwarves."[190]

The debate based on the opposition between bebop and the New Orleans style of jazz was soon considered as damaging to the entire movement of jazz music. In an article written around 1950, Panassié affirmed that it was time to end the dispute and deal with music itself.[191] Years later in his autobiography Delaunay recalled that the controversy divided jazz fans into rival

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[187] Denis Preston, "'Bop: the Music of a Social Revolution," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 814 (12 March 1949): 3.
[188] Denis Preston, "I Predict an Early Demise for Bebop," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 817 (2 April 1949): 3.
[189] Hugues Panassié, "Où va le jazz par Hughes Panassié," Le Figaro Litteraire (30 Juillet 1949): 6, Press Clipping, BNF AUD, Fonds Delaunay, Boîte no. 16.
[190] "Louis Armstrong (le seul et unique roi du Jazz, auprès duquel tous les Gillespie ne sont que de nains," Bullettin Panassié (3 Septembre 1947), BNF AUD, Fonds Delaunay, Boîte no. 16. On the revival of New Orleans style of jazz see Alyn Shipton, 'The New Orleans Revival in Britain and France', in *Eurojazzland: Jazz and European Sources, Dynamics, and Contexts* (Boston: Northeastern University Press, 2012), 235–74.
[191] "Il serait temps qu'on cesse cette querelle de mots "be-bop", "Nouvelle Orléans" ou autres, et qu'on s'occupe un peu de la musique elle-même, qu'on veuille bien se pencher avec amour et compréhension sur cette musique si fraiche, si neuve et qui manque jamais d'apporter, à ceux qui veulent bien l'aborder sans préjugés, les plus grandes joies." Hughes Panassié, La pseudo guerre du jazz" (estimated date 1950), BNF AUD, Fonds Delaunay, Boîte no. 16.

factions with the only effect being the further discreditation of jazz's reputation in the eyes of the public.[192] Still, already in 1948 Delaunay condemned the "sterile controversies" in an article published in the *Melody Maker*. There was no out-dated music or progressive music, Delaunay stated, but the only distinction that should be made was between good and bad music. Moreover, he maintained that art evolved in accordance to particular social and geographical conditions and adapted itself to human progress, and yet the evolution did not confer any superiority on each of the latest art forms. In this sense, a new generation of jazz musician had tried new forms of expression in a specific, aesthetic and material context.[193]

In an interview published in the *Melody Maker* in 1949, Dizzy Gillespie expressed what bebop meant to him: "bop is just the way I and a few of my fellow musicians think and feel jazz. It is our own means of expressing ourselves in music." The jazz they played was the modern music of their era, the superior musical knowledge and technique compared to musicians that came before allowed them to have a different language, but this did not mean being less sincere. Gillespie himself had studied African and Cuban music and incorporated their complex rhythmic elements, which were at the origins of American jazz, with modern harmonies. Therefore, he felt that musicians playing bebop were contributing to the advancement of jazz.[194]

The impact of bebop on jazz musicians in Europe was strong and it implied adaptation to a new way of playing jazz. As Coleridge Goode recalled, when after the war bebop became "the new thing," musicians had to adjust their musical thinking, but it took him a while to begin to understand the new idiom.[195] The main issue was that he had to become familiar with it, because it was a "finished product" that musicians had to make their own if they wanted to give it true meaning:

> If you are going to be able to play any music you have to be able to *feel* it. It's not a question of one note following another, so that you read it off in some mechanical way. You have to feel what you are playing if it is going to have meaning. With bebop and modern jazz, the people who developed in New York worked it out gradually and grew with it. But here in London we were just getting the finished product. So it was

[192] Delaunay, *Delaunay's dilemma*, 163.
[193] Charles Delaunay, "Enough of this sterile squabbing. A plea for tolerance," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 793 (16 October 1948): 3.
[194] "What is Bop? It's Just the Way I Think and Feel Jazz says...Dizzy Gillespie," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 810 (12 February 1949): 3.
[195] Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 51.

> necessary to become familiar with the sounds, to get used to them, and then they gradually became natural to us. Sound evokes feelings and if you aren't familiar with the sounds you haven't experienced the feelings that go with them.[196]

Musicians in France had the opportunity to hear the great stars of bebop at festivals and some of them were engaged by labels who recorded American players at that time. As Tom Perchard has underlined, most of these local players had previously played in different stylistic contexts, and needed to adapt to the new style. Django Reinhardt was the French musician who made the most high-profile adaptation to the new idiom, transforming his playing with the introduction of bebop elements.[197]

The influence of bebop was strong on French Caribbean music, too. In the post-war years the style of beguine found a new evolution in Paris thanks to the contribution of the Guadeloupian trombonist Albert Lirvat. Known as Al Lirvat, he had arrived in Paris in 1935 when he was a guitar player. With the outbreak of the war he had to return to Guadeloupe, but he was enlisted into the French army and returned to Paris in 1941. There he met Félix Valvert who proposed he learn to play the trombone and join his band with other Caribbean musicians, including the Guadeloupian saxophonist Robert Mavouzny who had arrived to Paris in 1937 to play with a Guadeloupian orchestra on the Guadeloupe Pavilion at the Exposition Internationale des Arts et Techniques. In 1944 Mavouzny brought Lirvat in to play at the club La Cigale. Located on the Boulevard de Rochechouart in the IX arrondissement and close to the Pigalle area, La Cigale was one of the main jazz clubs of the time, and American musicians performed there during the final stages of the war with the arrival of American troops into Europe. It was the impact of new American music that influenced Al Lirvat to innovate the beguine genre during the post-war years. In the late 1940s he merged the traditional Caribbean style with bebop using polyrhythm and a jazz-inspired harmony. It was a Dizzy Gillespie concert in February 1948 at the Salle Pleyel in Paris that inspired him to create a fusion between jazz and the beguine, introducing a dissonant harmony and polyrhythmic elements in the compositions.

[196] Goode and Cotterrell, 66–67.
[197] Perchard, *After Django*, 54–59.

This new style was called *wabap*, a term that Lirvat said was invented by a showgirl at the club La Canne à Sucre. In the early 1950s, the first beguines *wabap* was recorded.[198]

The impact of bebop on the music scenes of both London and Paris was strong in the jazz circle, while in more commercial milieus it was not welcome. For instance, Stéphane Grappelli recalled that in the years 1945-1950 he did not play bebop because he was working in elegant places in London where bebop did not have "the right of citizenship."[199] Nevertheless, there were examples of artists who in these contexts, were up with the times and used bebop in a more commercial way, without incorporating its idiom in their playing but using its musical appeal. For instance, Edmundo Ros on 24th March 1951 participated in the air programme "Jazz for the Moderns" singing "bop calypso." An article in the *Melody Maker* that announced the event, explained that Ros would depart from his usual and familiar style of Latin American music and would sing bop calypso backed by a bop band as well as tunes in the Afro-Cuban style.[200] Interestingly, over the same period, bebop was also celebrated by Lord Kitchener who recorded the song "Kitch's Bebop Calypso" for Melodisc on 15th March 1951 together with the song "London is the Place for Me." The lyrics were a celebration of bebop in which Lord Kitchener defined the music as "terrific" and labelled Gillespie, whose records had enchanted him, as the "bebop king."[201]

The musical innovations elaborated by musicians such as Lirvat tended to detach their music from the wider audience, and from the mixing of Latin American genres that other musicians performed both in Paris and London. As an article in the *Melody Maker* described in 1949, since the war there had been a high demand for Latin-American bands. This demand was filled by musicians who had worked for the pioneers of Latin music in London such as Marino Barreto and Edmundo Ros, had learned the idiom from them, and now formed their own bands. They recruited musicians from the dance field and taught them Latin-American genres, which resulted in the opening of new employment opportunities and in the emergence of a new generation of popular bandleaders. Among these were the Deniz brothers who formed their own band in 1949 with the Spanish name the Hermanos Deniz. Their use of guitars as front-line gave the band a different sound from most other commercial Latin bands.[202] They began to play

[198] Frédéric Négrit, *Musique et Immigration Dans La Société Antillaise: En France Métropolitaine de 1960 à Nos Jours* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004); Rosemain, *Jazz et Biguine*, 144–45.
[199] Grappelli, *Mon Violon*, 128.
[200] "Ros to Sing Bop Calypso in 'Jazz for Moderns.' Bop plus Afro-Cuban Programme," *Melody Maker* XX (10 March 1951): 7.
[201] The lyrics are available at: http://lyrics.wikia.com/wiki/Lord_Kitchener:Kitch%27s_Bebop_Calypso.
[202] Len Conley, "The Latin American Scene," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 846 (22 October 1949): 4-5.

at the Coconut Grove in Piccadilly where they started playing Latin music, especially Brazilian music, then they had engagements in elegant hotels and performed radio broadcasts. They were a novelty, Frank Deniz recalled years later, and had a hard battle competing against commercial types of Latin music which musicians like Edmundo Ros performed. Indeed, their aim was different. The Hermanos Deniz did not imitate Ros' impact and they did not become an outstanding name, but money was not the most important thing: "it was that we liked what we were playing," said Frank Deniz. Furthermore, the fact that they presented an "authentic" music - a traditional version of Brazilian music, - made it difficult for BBC producers to accept them because they could not understand it musically.[203]

In Paris, too, Latin music was widespread, and was among the genres of dance music that were most appreciated. For instance, Saint-Germain, the principal area where new forms of jazz found the spaces in which to spread in the 1950s, was not solely devoted to jazz, despite its description as the "Harlem of Paris," where clubs hosted jazz bands and did not provide space opportunities for commercial styles such as tango.[204] On the contrary, dance music played a fundamental part in the shows that many clubs offered, and they also included Latin styles. As the French saxophonist Lionel Boufflé recalled, he lost his job in various bands because he refused to play rumbas which the patron wanted the band to play to satisfy the demands of the customers.[205] Dancing was an important attraction of the *caves*, with the so-called *Rats de caves* professional dancers who moved to the rhythm of various genres of music and performed various styles of dance as pairs, including boogie-woogie and jitterburg. Significantly, the type of dance they developed was labelled bebop, a fact that shows the commercial impact of the new music.[206]

In the liveliness of the Paris music scene the employment of foreign musicians played a significant role. However, in the post-war years and the 1950s musicians faced high unemployment.[207] As occurred before the war, the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens opposed the employment of amateur musicians and the engagement of foreign musicians. For instance, the General Assembly the union organised on 21st October 1953, highlighted several issues, including amateurism which was damaging the profession by putting professional musicians out of work because employers engaged with amateur musicians often without declaring it. The

[203] Deniz, interview, 18 August 1989.
[204] Robert Aubert, Night in Paris, *Jazz Hot*, XV, no. 31 (Mars 1949): 29
[205] Dussault, 'Le Milieu Du Jazz à Saint-Germain-Des-Prés', 35.
[206] Dussault, 36; Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 251.
[207] "Où sont-ils?" *Jazz Hot*, XIII, no. 14 (Mai-Juin 1947): 18−19.

assembly re-emphasised its request for a professional card that would serve as a tool to limit damage to the music profession.[208] The issue of amateurism was serious because of the context of high unemployment that musicians in France had to deal with. For this same reason, the engagement of foreign musicians also received significant attention. Members of the Syndicat did not disregard the need for international cultural exchanges that contributed to developing connections between people, but because of unemployment they were concerned about the illegal engagement of foreign musicians, without any form of control. Therefore, they asked the government not to grant any exemption to the 30% limit of foreign musician employment, not to renew any ongoing exemption and not to issue new work permits until the labour market had improved for French musicians. In addition, they asked authorities to impose penalties against those inspectors who did not fully accomplish the monitoring task they had been entrusted with.[209] In this context, authorities usually considered American musicians as foreign tourists, therefore club managers could engage them without the need of work permits.[210]

Whereas in France musicians and the public could hear American artists playing in the country, in Britain the context was different. In the late 1940s and early 1950s the ban on American musicians made it difficult to listen to American music first hand, including the new style of bebop. The British journalist Max Jones recalled that after the imposition of the ban in the 1930s the first time he heard American musicians again was at the Nice Festival and at the Paris Festival where he attended concerts by Sidney Bechet and Charlie Parker.[211] The French festivals served as a frame of reference for the organisation of the Festival of Britain in 1951, and the issue of the ban on American musicians was one of the subjects of the debate, with bandleaders affirming that British stars of the dance and light music world would be a sufficient attraction for concerts at the festival.[212]

In June 1951 the *Melody Maker* complained that while the Ministry of Labour had already informed the National Federation of Jazz Organisations that they would grant working permits for two American stars to play at jazz concerts of the festival, the Musicians' Union had not

[208] As Eric Dussault has reconstructed, the request for the "carte professionnelle" had been made in October 1947 but it has been dismissed by the French Ministry of Labour that considered it a measure inspired by corporatist concerns thus restricting freedom to work. Dussault, 'Le Milieu Du Jazz à Saint-Germain-Des-Prés', 37–38.
[209] "Assemblée Statuaire des Musiciens des Orchestres de Genre du 21 Octobre 1953," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XXXVI, no. 332 (Novembre 1953): 128-129.
[210] Tournès, *New Orleans Sur Seine. Histoire Du Jazz En France*, 231.
[211] Jones, interview.
[212] "Can British-Only Jazz Fill Festival Hall? Bandleaders: Yes!" *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 921 (12 May 1951): 7.

imposed their sanctions, yet.[213] In the same issue of the journal, the German-Jewish ethnomusicologist and jazz critic Ernest Borneman who had lived in Britain since the 1930s when he was forced to leave Nazi Germany, wrote against the principle of nationality and in support of the principle of quality in art, regardless of origins. In his article Borneman criticised the protective measures advocated by the Songwriters' Guild and the Musicians' Union, such as the introduction of national quotas by the BBC, because if you believe that "art is indivisible," you cannot support a policy that "divides the worlds of art into national protectorates." The idea of nationality was alien to the artistic way of thinking, Borneman wrote: "the very concept of nationality strikes me as one that is extraneous to the thinking of an artist, and one that must be kept so if art is to preserve its integrity." In continuity with debates of the pre-war years, quality was at the heart of his argument. Artists should be supported if they were good, regardless of their origins, because the sole competitive factor that concerned Borneman was quality, and competition should be based on the improvement of one's own artistic work.[214]

The implementation of the ban on American musicians was already at the centre of the debate before the festival took place. In the post-war years, it was also linked to new developments in jazz music. As an article published in the *Melody Maker* reported, in March 1948 Dizzy Gillespie was expected to play a series of concerts in London with his band. The Musicians' Union broke a precedent, granting him permission to play on the basis of the "undisputed educational value to the profession" of his new music. It was an important occasion for British musicians and fans to learn at first hand "the newest and most discussed form of jazz that has made its impact on the musical minds in many years." Still, Gillespie was not able to perform in Britain because the Ministry of Labour refused to issue the necessary permits to play because of the ban on the admission of American bands.[215]

Even if at the beginning of 1949, the Musicians' Union made a step towards rescinding the ban, allowing British musicians to record with visiting American artists through agreements with the American Federation of Musicians and recording companies in the United States,[216] when it came to foreign artists performing in Britain, attitudes were different. This was evident

[213] "Festival Jazz: Still No MU Decision," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 924 (2 June 1951): 1.
[214] Ernest Borneman, "Dance Music Can't Live Behind National Barriers!," *Melody Maker* XXVII, no. 924 (2 June 1951): 2.
[215] "Dizzy Gillespie and Band Here in March – But Ministry of Labour Forbids Them to Play," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 757 (7 February 1948): 1.
[216] "M.U. Lifts Ban on Members Recording with U.S. Artists. 'Transcription Ban' Remains in Force," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 806 (15 January 1949): 1.

in the case of the show that Sidney Bechet was scheduled to perform in autumn 1949. The arrival of Louis Armstrong in Europe for a tour, and the presence of Sidney Bechet at the Paris Jazz Festival contrasted with the impossibility of seeing them in England due to the ruling of the Musicians' Union.[217] In October 1948 the *Melody Maker* reported that the Musicians' Union vetoed the appearance of Bechet for a series of concerts at major halls in London and provincial regions. The project was elaborated by Bert and Stan Wilcox of the London Jazz Club together with Charles Delaunay, and the journalist defined it as "the most exciting concert project that has yet been devised in the post-war era of jazz." The proposition to the Musicians' Union was motivated as a move of extreme cultural importance to jazz music in Britain. The article referred to Bechet's performance at the Paris Jazz Festival as an opportunity for several British musicians and music journalists to appreciate the stimulus he had for the whole profession. However, the Musicians' Union refused Bechet's application due to the policy of non-reciprocity between the United States and Britain with regard to dance musicians. With their decision, the Union adopted a policy of compliance with the norms instead of appreciating the "highly important educational and cultural implication of a visit of a man like Bechet," which resulted in the "stifling of jazz progress in Britain."[218]

It was Bert Wilcox's personal initiative that helped Bechet perform in London, nonetheless. Bert Wilcox was a London-born concert promoter and jazz club manager, yet, he had been active in the city's music scene playing various roles. He started working at an instrument shop in Denmark Street after he left school in 1927, and then worked in a record shop. Before and during the war he hosted record recitals on wind-up gramophone in Victoria Park in North-East London, then he worked as radio tester and radio engineer for the company HMV. After the war, he opened a radio shop in St. Johns Wood in North-West London where he also sold records. Furthermore, he started the London Jazz Club, a successful twice-weekly jazz club in Max's Rehearsal room in Denman Street in Soho, which in 1949 he moved to the Feldman Club in Oxford Street. In addition, he started a photographic magazine "Jazz Illustrated." In May 1949, he was at the Paris Jazz Festival where he met Sidney Bechet and arranged his performance in London during Bechet's European tour in November of that year.[219]

[217] Armstrong and Bechet for Europe But – as Usual – England Will Be By-Passed!," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 842 (24 September 1949): 1.
[218] "MU Vetoes British Tour for Sidney Bechet. London and provincial concerts arranged, but MU turns down whole exciting project," *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 844 (8 October 1949): 1.
[219] Bert Wilcox, interview by Andrew Simons, 9 October 1996, C122/289-291, BL NSA.

The denial of the permit notwithstanding, Bert Wilcox managed to help Bechet play in London. On 13th November 1949, he appeared at Winter Garden Theatre located in Drury Lane, in Covent Garden, where the London Jazz Club presented the first show of the English trumpeter and bandleader Humphrey Lyttelton's band. That morning Bechet recorded six tunes for Melodisc with the band, which was supposed to play with Bechet for his concerts. After the permit refusals, Bechet had been invited to attend the show. He was sitting in one of the theatre boxes when the presenter announced that he was in the audience. The public reaction was enthusiastic, and Bechet ended up many songs playing with the band. As the *Melody Maker* reported, it was an "historic evening" for all those who were there: "for everyone it was electrifying and moving to hear, in person, a great artist who, we had all thought, would never have the opportunity of playing to a British audience."[220] Bechet recalled that night in his autobiography:

> They turned the lights on me. Well, it was one of the loveliest things you could imagine; all those people, filling that theatre, they shouted and they stamped and they cried 'Play for us, Sidney'; so I got down out of the box and I went up there on the stage as a guest and I played with Humphrey and his band. […] It was a wonderful evening and that was one of the most sincere audiences I have ever played to.[221]

Bechet had arrived in London the day before, accompanied by Charles Delaunay and Bert Wilcox who had gone to Paris expressly to meet Bechet. Wilcox recalled that to help Bechet's arrival in London he used a forged work permit. He was later prosecuted by the Ministry of Labour for this and a similar incident involving Coleman Hawkins.[222] This episode shows how despite the ban, there were attempts to operate outside the provisions in order to help American stars to play in Britain, and in some cases, like that of Bechet, they were successful.

The ban did not affect only American players, but also other foreign musicians. As various articles in the *Melody Maker* show, similar issues involved foreign musicians denied the opportunity to play, and several British bands had trouble playing abroad. In all these cases the

[220] "Bechet plays in London! 1,750 fans go wild at dramatic appearance of great jazzman at Wilcox Brother's concert" *Melody Maker* XXV, no. 850 (19 November 1949): 1.
[221] Bechet, *Treat It Gentle*, 196.
[222] Wilcox, interview.

lack of reciprocity was always mentioned as the main reason for the difficulties.[223] In 1954 *L'artiste musicien de Paris* reported part of the letter the Musicians' Union had sent to the journal, concerning the case of British musicians employed by an orchestra in Paris who were refused labour permits by the French Ministry of Labour following the pressure that the Syndicat des Artistes Musiciens had put on authorities. The Musicians' Union affirmed that those musicians should blame themselves because they went to Paris without a contract and against the advice of the union. For this reason, the union sympathised with the French organisation that had moved to protect their members because of concerns around unemployment that affected them and which was more acute in France than in Britain. Indeed, the Ministry of Labour in cooperation with the Musicians' Union had prevented Britain from becoming a "landing site" for foreign musicians.[224] This document shows, on the one hand, the fact that musicians' unions in different countries in some instances sympathised with one another even if the case involved local musicians but who operated outside union advice. Simultaneously, it shows the actions of musicians who tried to go beyond union advice and public authorities provisions.

However, in the case of American musicians the issue of the ban was stronger because of the musical influence from the United States, and it had repercussions on American stars who were not allowed to play in Britain. Articles appearing in the *Melody Maker* show that within the union itself there was a debate on this problem. In May 1952 during a meeting organised by the London District Branch in Leicester Square in the West End, about one hundred attendees endorsed the union policy against the free entry of American musicians into Britain, which they maintained should not be varied except on a reciprocal basis. Still, one of the musicians put forward a proposal to admit a limited number of American jazz musicians per year on artistic grounds under the supervision of the union.[225] Furthermore, there were voices raised against the Musicians' Union policy, such as letters by readers of the journal that defined it as "ridiculous" and "nonsensical."[226] Musicians who broke the rules, such as a group of musicians who played at the Festival Hall organised by the National Federation of Jazz Organisations on

[223] For instance: "Dutch Ministry of Labour Does a 'Dizzy' on British Band," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 758 (14 February 1948): 1; "Ministry of Labour bars Reinhardt and Grappelly from Ballrome Date," *Melody Maker* XXIV, no. 764 (27 March 1948): 1; Belgium Bans British Bands. No permits for Randall and Krahmer: 'Lack of reciprocity,' say Belgian authorities,"*Melody Maker* XXV, No. 832 (16 July 1949): 1; "Swedish MU Will be Advised 'Ban Britain'," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 981 (5 July 1952):1.
[224] R. Constanty, "Main d'œuvre étrangère," *L'artiste musicien de Paris* XXXVII, no. 339 (Juin-Juillet 1954): 89.
[225] "London Musicians Meet to Uphold the 'Ban'," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 974 (17 May 1952): 1.
[226] "The Union and the Ban. Readers Who Are 'Profoundly Disfusted' Speak of 'Sabotage' and Urge 'Mass Demonstrations' Against the Current MU Policy" *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 979 (21 June 1952): 8.

the same stage as American and other foreign musicians, defying the union's ruling that prevented British bands from sharing the stage with foreign artists, resulted in their expulsion from the union.[227] In August 1952 the London Branch of the union approved a unanimous motion that recommended the Executive Committee of the organisation adjust its policy concerning the appearance of foreign musicians, reaffirming the opposition to the free entry of foreign musicians and asking for the appearances of foreign artists to be regulated.[228]

Several important musical agents on the dance music circuit met in London to discuss the problem of American jazzmen with the Musicians' Union. They lamented the inconsistent attitude of the union with requests for permission to invite artists.[229] An article published in November 1953 reported that the British agent Harold Davison during a trip in the United States found that many promoters were interested in booking British bands for tours on the basis of band-for-band exchanges. Even if he maintained that union officers viewed any agent with suspicion, he hoped for a change in policy and a fair interchange of British and American bands under union jurisdiction. The subtitle of the article emphasised how the fact that Americans asked to book British bands was unexpected and it opened "a new line of hope for Britain's frustrated jazz fans."[230] In another case, when in March 1954 a British band was refused permission to play with the American pianist Nat King Cole and three American jazz players at the London Palladium, it was the theatre manager who influenced the decision. The threat of legal action against the Musicians' Union and closure of the Palladium if the ban was enforced, forced the union to lift the ban.[231]

The pressure on the Musicians' Union to adjust its policy continued with articles emphasising how American stars passed through Britain without being able to play because of the ban and new organisations such as the newly formed Hot Club of London, which in 1954 announced that they would do all that they could to overcome difficulties that barred American stars from Britain but also work for the exchange between British bands and artists from other

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[227] "MU Members Defy Ban to Play at Festival," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 981 (5 July 1952): 1; "Union Action May Mean Two-Man Show At Festival Hall," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 978 (14 June 1952): 1; "MU Expels Seven Star Musicians: Seeking Other 'Rebels.' Conduct Detrimental to Union" *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 984 (26 July 1952): 1.

[228] **"**London Branch Urges MU: Lift Ban on U.S. Stars. 'Branches Throughout Country Must Now Put Similar Motions'," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 987 (16 August 1952): 1.

[229] "Union and Promoters to Discuss U.S. Jazzmen Problem," *Melody Maker* XXVIII, no. 997 (25 October 1952): 1.

[230] "America wants British Bands!," *Melody Maker* XXIX, no. 1051 (7 November 1953): 3.

[231] "Union Lifts Ban on Cole After Threat to Close London Palladium," *Melody Maker* XXX, no. 1071 (27 March 1954): 1.

European countries.[232] In October 1954 an article of the *Melody Maker* reported a letter that the British bandleader Ted Heath wrote to the chief of the American Federation of Musicians in which he urged a "more broadminded outlook" to the problem of the ban which could only result in a gain for the music profession as a whole.[233] One year later, in 1955 a reciprocal exchange agreement allowed for tours in 1956 by the British bandleader Ted Heath and his Orchestra in the United States, and by the American Stan Kenton and his band in Britain.

As Cloonan and Brennan have noted, this event marked the relaxation of restriction of dance bands from the United States with a crucial role played by the agent Harold Davison. Other similar agreements followed shortly afterwards and continued in the following years, based on the principle of reciprocity. The relaxation of restrictions enabled British musicians to tour the United States and grow their international audiences. In 1965 the so-called "British Invasion" of the United States – the arrival and success of bands such as The Beatles and The Rolling Stones – would be based on contact with the American Federation of Musicians, precisely regarding reciprocal exchanges, and nearly all those groups visiting the United States from Britain would be "beat" or "pop" bands whose international impact benefitted from the relaxation of restrictions.[234] Furthermore, these changes brought by the spread of new genres of music made some people in the entertainment business unable to adjust, while others were able to adapt. Many of the most important figures involved in the promotion of pop music in the 1960s had already been active as promoters but for other genres. Agents like Harold Davison used their experience to compete with younger but less well-connected rivals in the promotion of new artists.[235] The success of British music in the 1960s was a child of the relationships and musical developments that had occurred in the previous decade.

[232] "Four U.S. Giants of Jazz in London but not to Play," *Melody Maker* XXX, no. 1069 (13 March 1954): 1; "15 U.S. Jazzmen – Just Passing Through," *Melody Maker* XXX, no. 1099 (9 October 1954): 1; "Hot Club of London Plan War on Ban," *Melody Maker* XXX, no. 1098 (2 October 1954): 1.
[233] "Heath Asks AFM: 'End the Band'," *Melody Maker* XXX, no. 1100 (16 October 1954): 1.
[234] Cloonan and Brennan, 'Alien Invasions', 290.
[235] Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 184–87.

Coda

(R)evolution: Rock'n'roll and Decolonisation

Rock and roll was not a revolutionary form
or moment, but an evolutionary one,
the climax of (or possibly footnote to) a story
that began with Edison's phonograph.[1]
Simon Frith
(1987)

In the 1950s new musical genres had a crucial impact on dance music and changed music worldwide, especially rhythm and blues, and rock 'n' roll. Like other European countries, Britain and France were hit by the new music coming from the United States. By the mid 1950s popular dance orchestras were introducing rhythm and blues numbers in their shows, but it was the arrival and almost immediate success of rock 'n' roll that had the deepest impact on the music scenes.

In October 1954 the Brunswick record label released Billy Haley's "Rock Around the Clock," the first rock 'n' roll record in Britain. The following year the song was featured in the soundtrack of *The Blackboard Jungle*, an American film about juvenile delinquency and became a hit. In 1956 the song was an international phenomenon, and paved the way for the spread of rock 'n' roll in the music scene. Almost simultaneously, skiffle became very popular in Britain. Skiffle was a mixture of jazz, blues and African American folk songs, and emerged from the New Orleans style of revivalist jazz bands in the late 1940s. In 1956 Decca released the single "Rock Island Line" by the Scot Lonnie Donegan, and the song made skiffle extremely popular. Donegan had arrived in London in the early 1930s and was active in jazz clubs of the city throughout the 1940s. In the early 1950s he was a member of English trombonist Chris Barber's band, one of the leading figures of the revivalist movement of the New Orleans style

[1] Simon Frith, 'The Industrialization of Popular Music (1987)', in *Taking Popular Music Seriously: Selected Essays* (Aldershot and Burlington: Ashgate, 2007), 94.

in Britain, and during the intervals Donegan played a "skiffle" interlude incorporating blues songs.[2]

When rock 'n' roll arrived in France it was initially mocked within the music community. In 1956 the Guadaloupian singer Henri Salvador, who had been active in the jazz music scene since he arrived in Paris in 1929, and Boris Vian released four songs in the style of rock 'n' roll. Under the pseudonym Henry Cording, Salvador mimicked Haley's vocals by singing lyrics written by Vian. The musical arrangements written by the Parisian musician Michel Legrand replicated American rock 'n' roll tunes. Vian and Salvador intended the release to be a parody, as both considered rock 'n' roll another dance fashion that would not last and did not take it seriously. However, these tunes paved the way for the spread of rock 'n' roll music, which in its French version came to be known as *yé-yé* music, a derisive term that referred to the "yeah yeah" refrain of many rock 'n' roll American and British songs. Among the first to popularise the genre in France was Richard Anthony, an Egyptian salesman who discovered rock 'n' roll during a trip to Southern France when he heard an Elvis Presley record on the radio. He abandoned his job to begin a career as singer, adopted his American name and achieved commercial success with his versions of foreign rock 'n' roll hits, especially with the single "Nouvelle vague" which was published in 1959. "Nouvelle vague" (new wave) was the term Anthony used to define the new musical development that was hitting France, in line with the movements of artistic renovation in French cinema and literature.[3] After Anthony's success, other young male and female singers followed. They were for the most part produced by independent labels initially, such as Vogue that launched the Franco-Belgian Johnny Hallyday, the singer who became associated with the success of rock 'n' roll in France.[4] As Jonathyne Briggs has explained, both Anthony's and Hallyday's popular tunes were translations of American hits for the French audience, but the differentiation of musical genres in the American context between rock, folk, and pop, was often lost because music producers in France combined a variety of musical material to create the genre of *yé-yé*.[5]

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[2] Roberta Freund Schwartz, *How Britain Got the Blues: The Transmission and Reception of American Blues Style in the United Kingdom* (Ashgate, 2007), 57–66; Dave Rogers, *Rock 'n' Roll*, 2 [1982] (Abingdon and New York: Routledge, 2016), 70–84.

[3] Jonathyne Briggs, *Sounds French: Globalization, Cultural Communities, and Pop Music, 1958-1980* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2015), 18–21.

[4] Like Anthony, Hallyday chose to Americanise his name, adopting his American grandfather's surname. On Hallyday's early career see Chris Tinker, 'Rock "n" Roll Stardom: Johnny Hallyday', in *Stardom in Postwar France*, 2nd ed. (New York and Oxford: Berghahn, 2011), 67–74.

[5] Briggs, *Sounds French*, 23. On the development of popular music in the mid and late 1950s see Chapters 1 and 2 of David Looseley, *Popular Music in Contemporary France: Authenticity, Politics, Debate* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2003), 9–33.

The changes brought by this new music had an impact on the urban spaces of the music scenes, too. The spread of rock 'n' roll and skiffle was based on the so-called "do-it-yourself" music making. As Roberta Freund Schwartz has written, the "do-it-yourself" aesthetic was extremely significant because it introduced young British people to various genres of American music that were largely inaccessible before 1955, and shaped the following decades of British popular music, being the inspiration of many British musicians who emerged in the 1960s.[6] Young people who wanted to imitate their idols who had hit the charts, were a new kind of amateurs. Buying cheap instruments or making their own, they started playing and they formed bands. In Britain these bands were based in schools or youth clubs where they found opportunities to perform at dances or competitions they organised. It was a way in which teenagers approached various material: blues, jazz, rock 'n' roll, folk, calypso and popular hits. Yet, the music was not considered as confined to these spaces; skiffle started in West End jazz clubs and the early skiffle clubs followed the jazz clubs model.[7] The new genres were the music of coffee bars mostly located in Soho. Among these was the 2i's coffee bar in Old Compton Street, one of the first cafés to exploit its premises for music and dancing. Their cellars were the spaces where a talented young generation of musicians were discovered and launched to a mass audience, thanks to their evening entertainment based on the choice of a resident band and a succession of several amateur groups, which transformed these venues into spaces where record labels talent scouts found new artists.[8]

In Paris, the place from where rock 'n' roll spread was the club Golf Drouot. A barman Henri Leproux had opened it on rue Drouot in the IX arrondissement in Grands Boulevards area in 1955. Leproux installed a jukebox and stocked it with the latest single from the United States and Britain, attracting young rock 'n' roll fans and musicians. The club became the main destination for a new generation of young people, and it began hosting live music, too.[9] In this context a new kind of venue appeared in Paris - the discotheque - and from there it spread to London and beyond. It emerged as a club where records were played to make people dance. In 1947 the entrepreneur Paul Pacini from Marseilles, opened the club Whiskey à Gogo, in Rue de Beaujolais in the I arrondissement in the Palais-Royal area, where whiskey was served to a clientele that listened to African American jazz from a jukebox. In 1953 Régine Zylberberg, a Belgian woman of Jewish origin who had started working in the club as a hatcheck girl and

[6] Schwartz, *How Britain Got the Blues*, 70.
[7] Schwartz, 63–70; Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 90–104.
[8] Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 107–9.
[9] Briggs, *Sounds French*, 30.

who was to become an important entrepreneur and singer, implemented a change on the premises by removing the jukebox and installing two turntables that played records without interruption in between live music shows. Shortly afterwards, other similar clubs opened, such as Chez Castel in Saint-Germain-des-Prés. In 1958 Régine Zylberberg managed Pacini's new club, which came to be known as Chez Régine. Located in Rue Robert Etienne in the VIII arrondissement the Champs Élysées area, it was the first club designed exclusively for record music. At Chez Régine people danced to the rhythm of various genres of recorded music including rumbas, rock 'n' roll, and twist, which were popular at the time. Discotheques started to appear in other cities worldwide including London, where in 1962 the first venue of this type opened in Wardour Street in Soho, called La Discothèque.[10]

Record-playing was a fundamental part of these clubs' music appeal, and record-based entertainment - for example, jukeboxes - was one of their main attractions. "Do-it-yourself" music making was based on records. Skiffle and rock 'n' roll musicians of the 1950s received the initial impetus by listening to specific records and they developed their playing by listening to those records. While the BBC did not feature rock 'n' roll records at the time of their release and passed them to the Dance Music Policy Committee for examination, skiffle was better received and was aired by the BBC. Indeed, several skiffle tunes were featured on some light music programmes, and in 1957 the popularity of the genre influenced the BBC to introduce the show *Saturday Skiffle Club*, which replaced a theatre recital.[11]

In France it was a programme broadcast by an independent radio that operated outside the country to spread rock 'n' roll. As a programme featuring rock 'n' roll dedicated to teenagers, *Salut les copains* was created by the Parisian Daniel Filipacchi in 1959. Filipacchi was a jazz expert who, in 1955, had started an everyday jazz programme, together with the French jazz critique Frank Ténot, who had been president of the Hot Club de France in Bordeaux in 1944 and editorial assistant for *Jazz Hot* when he moved to Paris after the war. The programme was broadcast on the commercial station Europe No.1, which in the 1950s had established itself over the French border in Germany to avoid the prohibition of commercial broadcasting in operation in the post-war years, after the French government founded Radiodiffusion-

[10] Bill Brewster and Frank Broughton, *Last Night a DJ Saved My Life: The History of the Disc Jockey*, 3 [1999] (New York: Grove Press, 2006), 61–63; Jerram, *Streetlife*, 237–39; Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 175–76.

[11] Stephen Barnard, *On the Radio: Music Radio in Britain* (Maidenhead: Open University Press, 1989), 37–38; Schwartz, *How Britain Got the Blues*, 67; Martin Cloonan, *Popular Music and the State in the UK: Culture, Trade or Industry?* (Aldershot: Ashgate, 2007), 15; Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 114.

Télévision Française in 1945, which held a monopoly over the airwaves.[12] The programme was so successful that Filipacchi and Ténot bought the review *Jazz Magazine* which would become one of the most important jazz magazines. In addition, they organised European tours for great jazz musicians, and Filipacchi also worked as a record producer for the companies RCA Records and Decca. In the late 1950s Filipacchi and Ténot embraced rock 'n' roll. On the model of an American programme, they created *Salut les copains*, and this too, was broadcast by Europe No.1 in the afternoon, after school hours. They adopted an innovative style of presentation, which included jingles, inviting young people to participate in the shows by introducing and giving opinions on records and artists, and provided interaction between rock 'n' roll stars and their fans.[13]

Reactions to the arrival of rock 'n' roll went from the more conservative ones that pointed to its socially dangerous character, to positive receptions by figures like Filipacchi who embraced the new music and played a crucial role in its proliferation. In 1956 an article in the *Melody Maker* noted how, despite criticism of rock 'n' roll, from critics and the press, there was a craze for the new music, with rock 'n' roll record sales increasing, clubs devoted to rock 'n' roll opening, rock 'n' roll being featured on films and becoming popular in the dance halls, too.[14] Enthusiastic reactions to the film *Rock Around the Clock* in 1956 were described as "riots" in the press and they caused concern in conservative groups. Yet, as Martin Cloonan has explained, apart from issues of public order, the primary role of public authorities towards rock 'n' roll was one of "benign indifference."[15]

The main opposition came from within the music field. In December, another article in the *Melody Maker* labelled rock 'n' roll as the influence of the year, despite condemnation by musicians and critics. One editor of the journal had previously written how it was "the age of the common man" in which achieving fame in pop music demanded a "rabble-rousing technique" such as that of Elvis Presley. He pointed to the supposed fickleness of the audience that after the novelty had died, would turn to some new idol. The journalist hoped that "the record-buying public, fed too long on sugar and spice, will eventually get bellyache and be forced by sheer dyspepsia to lend an ear to real artists." This last definition "real artist" in opposition to a rock 'n' roll star like Presley, shows that while some readers described the craze

[12] Vihlen McGregor, *Jazz and Postwar French Identity*, 22.
[13] Tinker, 'Rock "n" Roll Stardom', 82–86; Briggs, *Sounds French*, 26–27.
[14] "Club, Disc Boom as Rock-and-Roll Craze Spreads," *Melody Maker* XXXII (14 July 1956): 2.
[15] Cloonan, *Popular Music and the State in the UK*, 16. On the reactions to the film and to rock 'n' roll music in general in the British press see also Jackson, *Policing Youth*, 182–84.

of rock 'n' roll as "one of the most terrifying things ever to have happened to popular music," the critical judgement tended to underline the lack of quality and artistry of rock 'n' roll music. Negative criticism notwithstanding, the article observed that the cult of the genre grew, for "rock 'n' roll with its untutored harmonies and basic beat, was bound to appeal to the musically uninitiated."[16] The idea that this kind of music attracted those who were untrained and lacked the skills to understand music, was also linked to the fact that the most significant impact of rock 'n' roll was on the younger generation.

Stéphane Grappelli affirmed that musical fashions were not inherently bad, but dangerous. For instance, the case of rock 'n' roll illustrated that danger was the lack of substance that a certain part of the genre had:

> A priori, je n'ai rien contre ce genre de musique. Pourquoi pas? Il existe d'excellents musiciens de rock. Mais on ressent, la plupart de temps, une impression pénible de vide, d'absence de substance. Une répétition des même schémas qui se sclérosent à toute vitesse. Ce rock-là me fait penser aux tubes de dentifrice: on presse et on jette. Comme si l'on voulait offrir au public, notamment aux jeunes, un produit de consommation banalisé et surtout vit usé pour des raisons commerciales évidentes.[17]

Grappelli's comment shows that in a similar way to the debates on jazz of the interwar years, one of the main issues raised about rock 'n' roll concerned the commercialisation of music, and the inadequate value given to good quality as well as substance in music, two aspects there were considered to be fundamental in all types of music.

It is important to underline that rock 'n' roll spread in a context of music industry evolution, which had an impact both at a musical and social level. Technological changes brought by the development of the 45rpm single, stereo recording and amplification were crucial to the spread of new genres of music, and in the ways in which they were consumed in urban spaces where they developed. Related to this was the emergence of new figures in the industry who specialised in the production of hits that were launched on a market where a new young generation, grew up in a time of economic growth that would become even stronger in the

[16] Laurie Hensaw, "Rock-'n'-Roll Swamps '56 Music Scene," *Melody Maker*, 815 December 1956): 21.
[17] Grappelli, *Mon Violon*, 159.

1960s, was increasingly important. Leisure was a fundamental component of young people's lives and was linked to the consumption of goods which included records, radios and electric musical instruments.

It is important to underline that this social phenomenon regarded primarily white youth mainly in urban contexts.[18] The spread of genres such as rock 'n' roll and skiffle was mostly connected to white young people both as musicians and in the public, and in the 1950s audiences of jazz, blues and rock 'n' roll were almost exclusively white.

In relation to France, Jonathyne Briggs has written that, despite the African American influences within rock 'n' roll, "the culture of the *copains*," – a term that defined young people who adopted rock 'n' roll as their main form of leisure – "implied a form of French whiteness that ignored the demographic shift of the French populace and asserted a normalcy that was young, urban, and white."[19] Yet, it occurred at a time of transformation in French society as a result of the decolonisation process.

In France, 1958 was the year when the Fourth Republic collapsed, replaced by the new constitutional system of the Fifth Republic. This change was for a great part propelled by the crisis linked to the Algerian war of independence which had begun in 1954 with the first initiative of the *Front de Libération Nationale*. After the end of French domination of colonial territories in Southeast Asia in 1954 and the fight for independence in Algeria, the new constitution of 1958 reinforced the autonomy of the overseas departments, and created the *Communauté française* within which the African territories associated with the Republic enjoyed autonomy on their internal affairs but were still controlled by France on all primary issues. Only French Guinea voted against the *Communauté* and declared complete independence. However, the *Communauté* was short-lived, as two years late, other French territories declared independence.[20] In this context, not only was the presence of North Africans in Paris, especially Algerians, characterised by spatial segregation, but they were suspected of support and collusion with the Algerian struggle. Indeed, with the deepening of the crisis in

[18] Studies that have devolted attention to youth in this period include: Richard Ivan Jobs, *Riding the New Wave: Youth and the Rejuvenation of France After the Second World War* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007); David Fowler, *Youth Culture in Modern Britain, c.1920-c.1970: From Ivory Tower to Global Movement - A New History* (Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2008); Jackson, *Policing Youth*.

[19] Briggs, *Sounds French*, 18.

[20] On the decolonisation of sub-Saharan French territories see, among others, Tony Chafer, *The End of Empire in French West Africa: France's Successful Decolonization* (Oxford and New York: Berg, 2002); Frederick Cooper, *Citizenship between Empire and Nation: Remaking France and French Africa, 1945–1960* (Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press, 2014). For more general reconstruction on the process leading to decolonisation see Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 106–62.

Algeria and demonstrations in Paris, French authorities added to the underlying concern regarding the danger for the social life and health of Parisian residents caused by these migrants suspected of supporting a terrorist activity.[21]

Racial tensions emerged, especially as new immigrants settled in the Paris suburbs, and were on the margins of French social and cultural development. However, as Briggs has noticed, the Richard Anthony's North African origins did not prevent him from becoming part of the pioneers of rock 'n' roll in France, and playing a crucial role in its popularity. In addition, in the early 1960s the Vietnamese singer Tiny Yong and the Madagascan band Les Surfs were examples of young people from two former colonial territories who in Paris managed to be part of the *yé-yé* movement.[22] They were exceptions, however, and above all, they did not have significant commercial impact among their peers.[23]

During the 1950s and early 1960s, repertoires of bands playing in Parisian clubs included the Caribbean genre beguine, which was modernised by introducing musical innovations. However, at the beginning of the 1960s it became less popular because the public tended to prefer Latin and Brazilian genres. In the following years new musical evolutions took place in the Caribbean thanks to a new generation of Caribbean musicians, and were no longer based solely on French Caribbean traditions, but asserted an Antillean/Creole identity, even if in the context of the French departmental system.[24]

In the British context, a similar process occurred. While in the 1950s new genres of music from the United States inspired young British musicians to produce new music, it was some time before the younger generation of blacks living in Britain, including newly arrived Caribbean immigrants, developed musical forms in the British context.[25] As Kenneth Bilby has

[21] Wakeman, *The Heroic City*, 145–61. On the Algerian War and its impact on France see Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca and London: Cornell University Press, 2008).
[22] Vietnam obtained independence in 1954 after years of war, but the country was divided into two territories and the war continued. Madagascar obtained independence in 1958.
[23] Briggs, *Sounds French*, 31.
[24] Monique Desroches, 'Musical Tradition in Martinique: Between the Local and the Global', *Transcultural Music Review/Revista Transcultural de Musica* 2 (1996), https://www.sibetrans.com/trans/articulo/279/musical-tradition-in-martinique-between-the-local-and-the-global. In the 1970s Haitian immigration to the Martinique had a significant impact because the music that immigrants brought with them had an influence on Martiniquan music. In the 1980s in Martinique and Guadeloupe the new hybrid genre of the zouk was created by black Creole-speaking Caribbean musicians. Based on on the beguine and Carnival music, it asserted an Antillean/Creole identity within the context of the French departmental system, and penetrated the international market. On the zouk genre see Jocelyne Guilbault, *Zouk: World Music in the West Indies* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1993).
[25] Oliver, *Black Music in Britain*, 82; Stratton, 'Melting Pot', 32–36.

written, it was reggae more than jazz that gained "archetypal status in Britain as an overarching sign of local blackness" during the 1970s.[26]

In the 1950s several black musicians were involved in new music developments, especially concerning jazz, such as Lauderic Caton and Coleridge Goode, who played in the popular band led by the African American drummer Ray Ellington.[27] The Jamaican saxophonist Joe Harriott, who arrived in London in 1951, played a significant role in the small modern jazz circle in London. Harriott had started playing bebop in Jamaica, but it was in London that he developed his own personal style with his band, the Joe Harriott Quintet, which included other Caribbean players such as Goode on bass. His way of playing, which he called "free form," was an important experimentation because it created a path derived from American jazz but independent from it.[28]

One of the places where Harriott played was a popular hangout for Caribbean migrants in London. The Flamingo Club opened in 1952 beneath the Mapleton restaurant in Leicester Square, and it featured modern jazz. Three years later the manager Rik Gunnell opened the Club Americana on the same premises which offered entertainment all night. Thanks to Gunnell's music policy which combined modern jazz with strong rhythm, the club was frequented by African American servicemen and Caribbean immigrants. The success forced the Flamingo to move to Wardour Street in Soho in 1957, and one year later Gunnell joined the club management and with his younger brother Johnny created a music agency.[29]

The Flamingo was the place that first featured the new Jamaican genre of ska in Britain. In the late 1950s Jamaicans had started to make their own rhythm and blues tracks that gradually developed in the two genres of ska and reggae. One of the first records to be made in Jamaica was produced by Edward Seaga who, following his interest in Jamaican popular music, started producing recordings for Jamaican artists and created the label West India Records Limited. For instance, in 1958 he produced the early records of Joe Higgs, one of the pioneers of reggae. Emil Shalit's label Blue Beat released the first tracks made by Higgs duo in 1960, starting the release of Jamaican artists and becoming the main label for ska in Britain. Shortly afterwards, the London-born Chris Blackwell, who had spent his childhood in Jamaica due to his father's

[26] Kenneth Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues Is to Jazz? Caribbean Roots/Routes in Imaginings of Black British Jazz', in *Black British Jazz: Routes, Ownership and Performance* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 66.
[27] Anon, "The Ray Ellington Quartet," *Checkers: A Monthly Journal in Black and White* I, n. 3 (November 1948): 14-15.
[28] Jason Toynbee, 'Race, History, and Black British Jazz', *Black Music Research Journal* 33, no. 1 (Spring 2013): 9–11; Goode and Cotterrell, *Bass Lines*, 114–53.
[29] Stratton, 'Melting Pot', 38–39.

work on the island in the Jamaican Regiment, created his own company Island Records in 1958. He recorded Jamaican artists there, and when he returned to London in 1962 continued to produce Jamaican music. His label competed with Shalit's company, and in the following decades was to become one of the most important British independent labels producing reggae and rock artists. Furthermore, in 1963 he started a rhythm and blues label, which played a pivotal role for the spread of the genre in the 1960s.[30]

As Jon Stratton has noticed, the early 1960s were characterised by a "confluence of musical genres" that entered Britain, which he directly linked to the presence of both African American servicemen and Caribbean immigrants who were a sort of gatekeeper for the introduction of genres such as rhythm and blues and ska. In addition, West African artists performed and recorded in the country, in some cases with British artists but also with Caribbean musicians developing new sounds.[31] Among them was the Nigerian Fela Kuti, who arrived in London in 1958 to study medicine but instead began studying music at Trinity College of Music. In the city he discovered new music such as bebop and Miles Davis's modal jazz, and Afro-Caribbean music, including calypso. He formed a band with other Nigerian musicians with whom he performed in music venues frequented by African students and workers. Fela would go back to his homeland in the mid 1960s and would become a pioneer of the Afrobeat genre.[32]

In Britain, migrants from colonial territories in the Caribbean and West Africa, developed musical forms arising from exchanges occurring in the urban context, especially in London. Given the large number of Jamaican migrants, reggae produced in the country was to become a fundamental component of the development of what Kenneth Bilby has defined "a new pan-Caribbean subculture" that was culturally dominated by Jamaican musical forms, especially in the 1970s when reggae in Britain brought with it the elements of protest and rebellion that characterised its Jamaican forms, and was "the defiant soundtrack" in a period of social and racial tension.[33]

The phase of the process of decolonisation that began in 1957 with the independence of Ghana was followed by the independence of Nigeria and Jamaica in 1960, and continued into

[30] Stratton, 40–43. On the early history of reggae see Lloyd Bradley, *This Is Reggae Music: The Story of Jamaica's Music* (New York: Grove Press, 2001).
[31] Stratton, 'Melting Pot', 44–45.
[32] Lindsay Barrett, 'Fela Kuti: Chronicle of A Life Foretold', *The Wire* 169 (March 1998), https://www.thewire.co.uk/in-writing/essays/fela-kuti_chronicle-ofa-life-foretold; Val Wilmer, 'Fela Kuti in London', *The Wire* 331 (September 2011): 30–37; Alexander Stewart, 'Make It Funky: Fela Kuti, James Brown and the Invention of Afrobeat', *American Studies* 52, no. 4 (2013): 99–118. For a reconstruction of West African artists in London see Chapter 4 of Bradley, *Sounds Like London*, 130–71.
[33] Bilby, 'Is Reggae to Black British Music as Blues Is to Jazz?', 67–68.

the 1960s. Lord Kitchener celebrated Ghana by recording the song "Birth of Ghana" on 6 March 1957, the day of independence, which was released by Melodisc. During the 1950s one of the themes of calypso tunes had been identification with Africa, yet the younger calypsonians' compositions increasingly dealt with local issues, too, including migration and racial discrimination.[34]

At the end of summer in 1958 incidents that involved Caribbean immigrants in Nottingham and London had a profound impact on British society. On 23rd August 1958, there were disturbances in Nottingham where white youth groups attacked Caribbean people in the streets after a fight outside a bar. The following weekend disorders occurred in Notting Hill. Groups of white people attacked black people whom they encountered in the streets. On 1st September 1958, after three evenings of mass racial violence, a large group of Caribbean men and women decided to react, and organise themselves to fight back. The police tried to stop the violence and arrested an overwhelming majority of young white working-class men responsible for the attacks. The following year, a Confidential Memorandum on Coloured Persons dated 18th June 1959 was circulated among the divisions of the London police. The memorandum contained instructions regarding the attitude that police officers should have in case of troubles involving coloured persons. More serious offences committed by West Africans, West Indians, Maltese, Cypriots, Indians and Pakistanis were to be reported to a specific branch of the police without delay. This did not apply to minor charges such as simple drunkenness. Information on disturbances or incidents that had some racial significance had to be sent to the division, and more serious racial disturbances had to be sent promptly.[35]

The riots had full coverage in the press, and this transformed the issue of migration from a local problem to a national issue, which contrasted with the narrative of the British nation founded on tolerance and multiracial inclusiveness.[36] However, the riots did not result in an immediate introduction of restrictive measures through legislation on immigration, in a period when the government was engaging negotiations over decolonisation and the commitment to the Commonwealth was reaffirmed.[37] Only in 1962 was new legislation on immigration

[34] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 72–73.
[35] TNA MEPO 2/7344/21
[36] Perry, *London Is the Place for Me*, 89–92; Hansenn, *Citizenship and Immigration*, 81–83; Spencer, *British Immigration Policy*, 99–101. On the 1958 race riots in Notting Hill see Edward Pilkington, *Beyond the Mother Country: West Indians and the Notting Hill White Riots* (London: Tauris, 1988).
[37] Buettner, *Europe after Empire*, 23–77. Studies on the British process of decolonisation include; John Darwin, *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1988); William Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006).

introduced. Yet, migration from the Caribbean continued to attract the attention in the years preceding the 1962 Commonwealth Immigrants Act. For instance, in 1959 the BBC Caribbean Service published a series of broadcasts that it had made for Caribbean people who were thinking of going to Britain to find employment. The reason behind this program was to give explanations of the kind of life a person arriving in Britain was likely to encounter, and provide advice. The broadcasts regarded various aspects of life especially the difficulties that they might experience, such as the increasing scarcity of jobs for unskilled people and the differences in customs and temperament.[38]

On the part of Caribbean communities, the response to the riots was one of celebration deeply rooted in the Caribbean tradition. At the end of 1958 Trinidadian activist Claudia Jones called a meeting of local people asking what could be done to boost morale and celebrate Caribbean culture. The answer influenced the first Caribbean carnival in London. Jones had arrived in London in 1955 after being expelled from the United States, where she grew up, because of her communist activity. She arrived in the city from Harlem, but did not stop her political activities, in fact she joined the British Communist Party, fought against racism and founded of the first Caribbean newspaper *West Indian Gazette*, whose offices were situated above a Caribbean record shop in Brixton area. St. Pancras Town Hall in North London was the location where the Carnival took place on 30th January 1959, organised by Jones and supported by the *West Indian Gazette*. The Trinidadian singer Edric Connor was appointed director of the carnival. The venue was fully decorated to recreate a Caribbean setting, and it hosted Caribbean artists including Boscoe Holder's dance company, which was one of the headliners. There were so many people who wished to attend the event that those who could not enter stayed outside, listening to the music coming from the inside. The BBC broadcasted the event on television and the Carnival was so successful that it would be repeated annually with an increase in attendance ever since.[39]

Paul Gilroy has written that the "musical heritage" that "gradually became an important factor in facilitating the transition of diverse settlers to a distinct mode of lived blackness," was, among other factors, "indelibly marked by the British conditions in which it grew and matured."[40] In this sense, the riots of Notting Hill and the beginning of a musical tradition taking

[38] BBC Caribbean Service, *Going to Britain?* (London: British Broadcasting Corporation, 1959).
[39] Bradley, *Sounds Like London*, 77–79. On Claudia Jones see Carole Boyce Davies, *Left of Karl Marx: The Political Life of Black Communist Claudia Jones* (Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2008); Bill Schwarz, '"Claudia Jones and the *West Indian Gazette*": Reflections on the Emergence of Post-Colonial Britain', *Twentieth Century British History* 14, no. 3 (2003): 264–85.
[40] Gilroy, *The Black Atlantic*, 82.

place within the urban spaces as a response of a migrant community to the riots, were important events. Moreover, Gilroy has affirmed that the experience of Caribbean migrants to Britain provides "examples of complex cultural exchange." The effects of racism alone do not explain the synthesis of migrants different cultural histories into a "black British culture," therefore external meanings around blackness, especially from black America, should be considered important factors in the elaboration of "a connective culture which drew these different 'national' groups together into a new pattern that was not ethnically marked in the way that their Caribbean cultural inheritance had been."[41] In this process, the urban context in which black cultural forms developed was a fundamental feature.

"A people's art is the genesis of their freedom" said the slogan written on the pamphlet at the Carnival. As Paul Oliver has maintained, under the conditions that black migrants experienced in Britain, many musical forms flourished, but in a changed state.[42] The encounters, exchanges, and experiences that musicians had in the urban contexts of both London and Paris were fundamental for their formation. The 1950s was a time in which the younger generation affirmed a new freedom, and music was a primary component. This phenomenon was deeply connected with the urban space, with the music scene in which it developed, and with the music industry. The distance between a young white generation dancing to the rhythm of rock 'n' roll and post-war black migrants, in the late 1950s and early 1960s was marked. As Marc Matera has noticed, in the context of decolonisation and the Cold War black musical styles "were nationalized in ways that effaced the transatlantic traffic that shaped them, even as artists continued to use them to critique political oppression and economic exploitation and to dialogue across national boundaries."[43] The 1960s marked a new era in this sense, which I will not analyse in this work, but at a musical level the urban context would provide the spaces for cultural exchanges that would lead to new musical developments in the following years. It is sufficient to say that the contacts between musicians and the musical exchanges continued, influencing new genres in the following decades, as the impact that reggae had on two (white) London-based bands which emerged in the late 1970s and gained success worldwide, the punk rock band The Clash and the rock band The Police, show.[44]

[41] Gilroy, 82.
[42] Oliver, *Black Music in Britain*, 84–85.
[43] Matera, *Black London*, 182.
[44] See Mykaell Riley, "Bass Culture: An Alternative Soundtrack to Britishness," in *Black Popular Music in Britain Since 1945* (Farnham and Burlington: Ashgate, 2014), 106–109.

Conclusion

This work has a special value for me. I am both musician and historian, therefore my interest in music goes beyond academic study. My investigation has been driven by a deep passion for the subject of this thesis.

Black musical genres had a deep impact on music, and they spread through contact and exchanges between musicians which mainly occurred in urban music scenes where musicians entered into contact with one another. Like New York, London and Paris were big metropolises that increasingly attracted musicians who found possibilities to build or continue their careers there. The liveliness of the music scenes was the main factor at the basis of the arrival of musicians in the cities and musicians who wanted to build their careers found the music scenes of Paris and London attractive places to go.

London and Paris were capitals of nations and empires, and played a role as metropolises at an international level. In urban contexts these multiple levels intertwined with each other, therefore the cities were at the nexus of multiple cultural sources and influences. Various instances show how they were unique, reflected at a local level by legislation, as in the case of special legislation implemented by authorities in the two capitals, for example club opening hours or the employment of foreign artists. The two metropolises were also protagonists at an international level, for instance, they acquired an increasing importance as sites of specific sectoral development, including entertainment.

The London and Paris music scenes attracted musicians from within national borders and from abroad because of the development of the music industry through the spread of music as a leisure activity. They played a crucial role in spreading black genres of music because of music industry developments that made it possible for musicians to record for newly created labels, perform in clubs, and find the spaces to interact. Musicians went to London and Paris, for sojourns of varying duration, because they found opportunities in the cities for work and to build their careers. In my investigation I have underlined how this occurred in different ways. Some musicians arrived on the occasion of big international events that took place in the cities such as expositions and festivals, in part linked to specific ideological expressions of empire and the nation-state, including the Paris Colonial Exposition of 1931 and the Festival of Britain in 1951, which conveyed cultural expressions within the framework set by organising public authorities. Other musicians arrived in the cities after having received musical training in military bands or police bands, as well as in musical institutions such as the Paris Conservatoire

and Royal Academy of Music in London. In other cases they arrived through informal networks that developed in the context of urban space, such as Archer Street in London, and through informal contact with people working in the entertainment business who played a role in recruiting artists, including musical agents and bandleaders who had built their careers in the cities such as the Caribbean bandleaders Ken Johnson and George "Happy" Blake. The example of Blake also shows that the geographical proximity of Paris and London increased the likelihood of musician movement between the two cities. Blake was active on the Parisian music scene before establishing himself as drummer and bandleader in London, and similar paths characterized the careers of other musicians, too. In other cases, musicians were forced to move because of events independent of their careers. For example, the outbreak of the war forced the French violinist Stéphane Grappelli to leave France, and settle in London in the 1940s. With the ban on American musicians, this proximity became important, for instance, when a group of British musicians saw bebop players at the Paris Jazz Festival for the first time in 1949, or when Sidney Bechet performed in London thanks to the work done by Bert Wilcox in collaboration with Charles Delaunay in Paris.

The research has shown how both Paris and London functioned as sites of cross-fertilisation of distinct genres of music. In the two cities a mix of foreigners, locals, and subjects of the empires (British-born, Caribbean but also African) encountered each other in the urban spaces and combined their personal musical expressions with other influences. The convergence of musicians in the metropolises and the intermingling of musical cultures they brought with them, produced new hybrid compositions.

The time frame of the thesis is the late imperial period (1920s-1950s). These decades had musical "markers:" jazz and rock. As Elijah Wald has written, the 1920s ("the Jazz Age") and the 1960s ("the Rock Age") were marked by two musical genres which were symbols of the dreams and hopes of new generations. For many members of these generations, their value went beyond their musical form; they represented new languages through which they could express attitudes and emotions.[1]

This investigation has taken the years which followed the First World War as a starting point because at this moment, black genres of music started to spread in Europe, thanks to the arrival of military bands and big orchestras from the United States such as the Southern Syncopated Orchestra. In the late 1920s Caribbean genres started to spread, too, in particular Cuban music.

[1] Elijah Wald, *How the Beatles Destroyed Rock 'n' Roll: An Alternative History of American Popular Music* (Oxford and New York: Oxford University Press, 2009), 3.

In addition to this, the early 1920s were the years when new developments in the music industry occurred deeply influencing music production and distribution such as the beginning of radio broadcasting.

The time span of the research has extended until the late 1950s, when musical and social changes at local, national and international levels took place. At a musical level, in the late 1950s mainstream jazz gave way to other styles, such as free jazz. The most important change in the live music business in these years was linked to genres of music: while between the Second World War and the spread of rock 'n' roll dance bands and musical performers in variety theatre were protagonists in live music entertainment, in the 1960s the demand for big bands and variety almost disappeared and pop and rock groups were the fastest growing part of the live music economy.[2] This combined with changes linked to a new generation of musicians emerging and the passing of important figures of the older generation. In 1959 Boris Vian and Sidney Bechet, two figures who had played a crucial role in the Parisian music scene in those years, died.

In this period changes involved the production of Caribbean music, too. The year 1956 marked the end of the recording of calypso in Britain for the Caribbean market and the beginning of the recording of calypsos on location in Trinidad and British Guyana. In Jamaica, too, recording studios and labels were created in the late 1950s for the release of Jamaican genres.[3] In a similar way, it was music produced on location in Martinique and Guadeloupe that produced a new evolution of Caribbean genres, especially the beguine.

The process of decolonisation had an impact at a musical level with the emergence of tunes featuring themes linked to black culture, and a new value given to typical musical genres for the newly-independent countries. However, this process also influenced movements of people who returned to their countries of origin after independence. For instance, at the time of Trinidadian independence in 1962, many calypsonians had begun to leave Britain and resettle in Trinidad, including Lord Kitchener who returned to his homeland in 1962. This combined with the new legislation on Commonwealth immigration introduced that year, aimed at stopping the flux of migrants from former colonies, and changed the local British music scene. As John Cowley has noticed, the return of calypsonians to Trinidad was the sign of the end of an era and

[2] Frith et al., *The History of Live Music in Britain*, 184.
[3] Cowley, 'London Is the Place', 72.

the beginning of another for Caribbean music in Britain along with the rise of the street carnival in Notting Hill in London.[4]

The time span adopted for my investigation has allowed me to show how in decades during which different technological developments, movements of people, and musical innovations occurred the music scenes changed, and how actors who operated in them were displaced by the change or were able to adapt. In addition, some of these developments built on previous developments, in a process of continuity and changes that was not linear, but had what in music is called a contrapuntal development. Music evolved in a process of continuity and changes occurring in the music scenes at local, national and international levels. These elements of continuity are evident for instance in the case of the first recordings of calypsonians in Britain in the post-war years. When in 1950 Lord Kitchener recorded his first calypso for Melodisc he was backed by Freddy Grant's band, formed by Caribbean musicians who had been active on the London music scene in the 1930s, and these musicians tutored new arrivals from the Caribbean and Africa. At the end of the decade, people such as Emil Shalit and Charles Delaunay, who had been important figures in the post-war years, played a crucial role in introducing new genres such as ska and rock 'n' roll.

Taking the music scenes as the main focus of analysis has allowed me to investigate black musicians as a diverse group. I have not placed attention on specific individuals or great stars (even if stars are present in the research, such as Josephine Baker and Sidney Bechet). It has been my intention to help a wider urban history emerge. Musicians based in London and Paris, whether migrants or otherwise, contributed fundamentally to the development of an underground musical environment in which black genres of music had significant influence. Incorporation of African American and Afro-Caribbean styles in the music produced in Paris and London was driven by the presence of musicians in the music scenes as well as the release of records that musicians listened to with the development of the recording industry. As the lives and careers of many black musicians show, in incorporating material from various genres, they established connections between black people of different origin which developed new musical articulations thanks to the urban experience in the two imperial metropolises. This process also involved white musicians who entered into contact with black genres, especially jazz, and incorporated its language into their compositions, such as Spike Hughes and Claude Luter. White men and women, who played a role in the music scenes and in the spread of black

[4] Cowley, 74.

genres of music as musicians but also club owners or managers, producers and critics, have also been included in this research.

This investigation has adopted an urban perspective of analysis because the urban context was fundamental for the spread of black genres of music in London and Paris. Over the years they spread in specific areas of the urban music scenes (Montmartre, Montparnasse, Saint-Germain-des-Prés and the Latin Quarter in Paris, and the West End), in clubs where musicians worked and which were meeting places for people working in the entertainment circuit, too. Many of those artists who worked in theatres and cabarets went to underground clubs after work where they met, exchanged ideas, amused themselves and played in jam sessions. All these elements contributed to the liveliness of these spaces, which were crucial for the spread of black genres of music. Moreover, these spaces were cosmopolitan spaces. So-called black clubs were rare spaces of encounters and expression for black people of different descent in the metropolises, but in various cases they attracted a mixed clientele as emerged in the cases of the Jig's and the Caribbean club in London, or the Bal Blomet and the *cave* La Rose Rouge in Paris.

Specific areas of London and Paris were gathering places for black musicians from both sides of the Atlantic, and other people of African descent. Musicians' experiences as migrants in the cities influenced their lives and their musical production. Encountering other musicians both local and from various parts of the world, especially other black musicians from other parts of the empire, and entering into contact with genres of music they were not familiar with, were fundamental for their musical paths. These spaces were part of a cosmopolitan setting. I have shown how contemporary writers described the areas and the spaces for entertainment with explicit reference to cosmopolitanism (and internationalism). They considered specific genres of music significant factors in changing and shaping the urban space, and for the spread of new cultural forms in these spaces. What I have labelled "dual cosmopolitanism" expresses the binary character of this white, male, bourgeois literature. Some writers enthusiastically described the liveliness and the cosmopolitanism of these urban areas linked to entertainment, while others conveyed the idea that they were characterised by a dangerous cosmopolitanism, associated with decadence, criminal activities and illicit economies.

The social dimension has been central to my approach of analysis. Black genres spread within the music scenes, the music industry, and international musical developments. They were part of various phenomena, which had both local and international dimensions. Black genres of music spread internationally, but were produced in several specific locations where

the infrastructure of the music industry had developed, such as New York. London and Paris were two other main sites of new music production and in the mid 1930s, the first recordings of Caribbean music in Europe were made there. In the post-war years, independent labels such as Melodisc in London and Vogue in Paris played a crucial role in the production of black genres of music.

At a local level this investigation has shown how black musicians were part of the network of cooperation in the music scenes of Paris and London. They were actors within a social urban context where other actors operated, and with whom they interacted. The contribution of people performing a series of activities necessary for playing music in the music scenes was crucial for its circulatation, including black musical styles. These activities were in part linked to developments of previous decades, such as the case of music shops founded in the nineteenth century, but they were also linked to changes that occurred in the music scenes with the spread of jazz and dance music. People like the African American singer Bricktop, who arrived in Paris to perform and then became a club manager, exemplified the overlapping roles that various black people played in the music scenes, and the flexibility of these urban contexts that allowed actors to play different roles. Another interesting case exemplifying this overlapping is the British Guyanese clarinettist Rudolph Dunbar, who was a musician and teacher, founded his own school of clarinet playing in the West End and wrote a course on the instrument published in the journal *Melody Maker*. In this network there were fundamental figures who played a role in spreading new genres, such as the French record producers Charles Delaunay and Hugues Panassié, who promoted and produced jazz in France. Additionally, the London-born producer Denis Preston and the American with Jewish and Central-European origins Emil Shalit in Britain, who promoted and recorded Caribbean genres in the country during the post-war years.

Black clubs were cosmopolitan spaces, and the network of cooperation in the music scenes had a cosmopolitan character, too. Broadening this idea of cosmopolitanism we can consider music itself as a "cosmopolitan space," in the sense that this research has revealed how many musicians thought that musical abilities and quality were more important than anything else in music. There are many examples of musicians who, recalling their careers years later or expressing their ideas in the debate at the time, affirmed that what they wanted as musicians was to play good music with good musicians. This is even more significant in the case of black musicians regarding their perception of blackness. When Clare Deniz said that she treated herself first and foremost as a person, and that as musicians they did not have any colour complex and mixed with everybody, she expressed a feeling that I have labelled "indifference

to blackness." This concept does not imply that black musicians did not place importance on their origins, or that they were unaware of or did not experience discrimination. It intends to give a sense of the complexities of definitions of personal belonging. Through an analysis of musicians' experiences, whose artistic sensibilities arise from the appreciation of beauty and of authentic personal expression, this concept has allowed me to give evidence to a feeling that did not consider racial belonging as the main issue that characterised them as individuals and musicians.

In many cases of the first stages of early twentieth century music development, solo musicians and bands played various genres of music such as jazz, rumba, calypso, all identified as "black" music by the audience. Musicians adapted to this blurring, performing genres of music which had different origins. They adopted various practices for learning and performing black genres of music, working hard as musicians in a context in which, with the vogue for black styles, being black was often more important than personal musical histories, for obtaining work.

However, the process of commercialisation was also opposed by those who placed importance on music as an artistic form through which musicians express themselves and which should be "authentic." Interestingly, in some cases, it was the reaction to commercialisation of black styles found in the music scenes of London and Paris that influenced several musicians to form bands to perform specific genres, searching to play "authentic" music without contamination, for specific black audiences, of principally students and servicemen, and in the post-war years, of people who had arrived in the cities from new waves of migration.

Taking the image of the pendulum that Monica Kaup has used to describe black experience in the Americas,[5] we can describe the decades that I have taken into consideration as characterised by swinging back and forth between opening and closures. This process regarded receptions of black music forms with debates in which issues of modernity, authenticity, quality, and commercialisation, were addressed in different ways. It also regarded the reception of foreign influences, with the issue of reciprocity that characterised the British debate especially on the relationship between musicians' unions and the employment of foreign musicians. However, opening and closures also characterised the reception of the audience. On

[5] "The black experience in the Americas can be modeled as a pendulum, swinging back and forth irregularly between opposite poles of homelessness and homecoming in the nations of the Americas. Rather than identifying successive and separate states of past and present, the black voice of exile and the black affirmation of inclusion represent alternating pulses." Monika Kaup, '"Our America" That Is Not One: Transational Black Atlantic Disclosures in Nicolás Guillén and Langston Hughes', *Discourse* 22, no. 3 (Fall 2000): 90.

the one hand commercialisation of music put black genres be in vogue, but on the other, it was the underground culture of clubs in which dance music spread that influenced the commercialisation of genres that people liked when they danced in clubs.

Not only was the process of opening and closures exemplified through reception and dismissal of black musical forms, but also through state intervention in the music scenes. One of the main issues that underscored this intervention was the maintainance of public order, especially because in the areas where clubs were located, criminal activity occurred. States intervened mainly through specific legislation on entertainment; a system of licenses, police surveillance etc. Intervention was linked to the pressure that specific groups put on public authorities to pursue their interests, too, in a process of negotiation between them, as happened in relation to musicians' unions that urged British and French governments to take action in support of their members especially because of unemployment or competition from foreign musicians. One example of the outcome of this process was the 1933 decree limiting the proportion of foreign musicians who could be employed in orchestras in the Seine region in France at 10 %. Interestingly, the investigation of conflicts concerning the employment of foreign musicians in several cases has also revealed the importance that musicians gave to musical value. Requests to stop the "invasion" of foreign musicians that members of musicians' unions thought was damaging the profession, emerged more strongly at difficult times, in relation to unemployment and technological developments that were causing changes in the music world, especially with the mechanisation of music. In several cases, in order to make these requests more defensible, unions clarified that they were not directed against artists of absolute value or international character, but they involved musicians who were not "of the highest types."

Furthermore, this research has shown how governance practices and their contestation in the cities involved different layers, including national and local metropolitan levels of governance. These multiple layers give a sense of the complexity of the context in which people involved in the decisions and in the implementation of the provisions operated; a context that was unstable with clubs opening and closing very frequently. For instance, measures on foreigners were taken at the national level, but their application was dependent on the actions of local officers. Police officers had to deal with actors in the music scenes who did not respect the rules. For instance, club owners or promoters tried to avoid measures that restricted the employment of foreign musicians. The same issue occurred with regard to provisions concerning clubs established at a municipal level, with the difficulties that the police faced to

deal with irregularities that club managers made for circumventing restrictive legislation on clubs. This research has revealed that police officers as individuals could play a role in the implementation of the provisions. In addition to cases of bribery and corruption, the importance of their agency has emerged. In some cases when police officers lamented that they could not intervene effectively in clubs and urged the introduction of specific legislation, whereas in others they limited themselves to reporting the problem and affirmed that it was beyond their responsibility to suggest a remedy.

I have not built this thesis with a strictly comparative approach exploring two cities and two music scenes - limiting its scope to the analysis of differences and similarities, - but I have conceived this research as a transnational study that deals with a subject that is both local and non-local, as Simon Frith has defined the music industry.[6] Therefore, the analysis of the two music scenes has built on the idea that they were poles of an international music scene, in close relationship with each other because of their geographical proximity but also because of their international roles as centres for entertainment.

In the thesis I have tried to show how this relationship was characterised by parallel developments (e.g. the formation of networks of cooperation in the music scenes; the importance of imperial-driven events such as exposition for migration), different paths, and also a direct connection that actors in the music scenes created. Furthermore, it was interesting to detect a direct comparison between the two cities made by several writers that described the nightlife in Paris and London, which resulted, on the one hand, in the reference to Parisian nightlife as a standard, and, on the other, in the emphasis on a process of internationalisation that the two cities had in common. In other cases, musicians observed how Paris offered more opportunities in entertainment. For instance, Frank Deniz recalled that many artists arriving in London from the United States and the Caribbean tended not to stay there and to go to Paris, where they could find a better atmosphere and more opportunities.

The analysis of government policies in the two contexts has revealed that these personal observations were matched with the development of different entertainment related policies. Whereas in both countries authorities responded to the request to stop the arrival of foreign musicians in a context of unemployment and introduced laws limiting this presence, and were concerned with the maintenance of public order in the cities - which they regulated through a system of licenses and police monitoring of spaces for entertainment, - these responses differed.

[6] Frith, 'Live Music Exchange', 298.

In Britain issues of moral order influenced the policing of the music scenes, with moral campaigns, increasing restrictions and raids against irregular clubs even if with not lasting results. In addition, the lack of reciprocity with the American Federation of Musicians in the issue of working permits for musicians, led to the restrictions of American musicians arriving in Britain which would only end in the mid 1950s. In France authorities seemed to be more concerned with individual surveillance especially of foreigners or colonial subjects involved in political activities, and the activity of monitoring the entertainment scene did not include specific restrictions directed to spaces for entertainment. This difference impacted on the entertainment scenes in the two cities, and suggests that the urban environment of Paris granted more opportunities for musicians because of a less strict policing of urban spaces and the ongoing opening to American musicians, the restricting laws on foreign musicians notwithstanding.

At a musical level, too, Paris played a crucial role and there are instances of musicians who were positively identified with their activity in Paris when they were presented in London. In addition, some instances show how an activity of recruitment was made in London by people from Paris such as in the case of Peter DuConge for Louis Armstrong tour in the mid 1930s. In the post-war years the arrival of Sidney Bechet was linked to the joint work of the London-born promoter Bert Wilcox and Charles Delaunay.

This thesis contributes to widen the perspective of historical studies on music developments, in particular placing importance on their social and spatial dimension. However, it has been necessary to limit the scope of the investigation, and there are many aspects that require further research. For instance, deepening research on perceptions of blackness could give further insight on what I labelled "indifference to blackness," establishing, for instance, what the factors were that influenced musicians to generate different perceptions and how these perceptions changed in relation to their experiences and their personal backgrounds.

By concentrating the analysis on Atlantic connections, this investigation has not included musicians from African countries, who also played a part in the music scenes and in building black musical articulations in both Paris and London. Therefore, further research on the urban music scenes that include African musicians is important. In addition, this research has not gone deeper into the role of audience reception of black genres and of technological developments in music and has referred to them mainly for their social implications; this worth analysing in

more depth. In particular, this investigation has not included an in-depth research on developments in radio broadcasting, on programming and debates linked to them, or on the role of the radio with a specific attention to black genres of music. There are indications to suggest that research on this aspect could produce interesting results.

Finally, the relationship between the two cities and music scene could be further explored and elaborated with more specific research questions relating to their role as centres for entertainment within an international music scene.

With its limits, this thesis has shown the complexity of the musical evolution of black genres that occurred during the late imperial period within urban music scenes, and within music industry developments both at a local and at international level in London and Paris. This process was produced by a minority (blacks), but had a significant and lasting influence on music as a whole.

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- APP DA Police Administrative
- APP DB Police Administrative
- APP GA Renseignements généraux
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British Library (London)
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London Metropolitan Archives (London)
- LMA A/PMC Public Morality Council
- LMA GLC Greater London Council

The National Archives (London)
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- TNA MEPO Metropolitan Police (MEPO 2; MEPO 3)
- TNA LAB Ministry of Labour (LAB 2)

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